



NORWEGIAN MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Meld. St. 33 (2011–2012) Report to the Storting (white paper)

Norway and the United Nations: Common Future, Common Solutions



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(White paper from the Stoltenberg II Government)*

Summary

Vision and values

Norway has a fundamental interest in a well-functioning global legal order in which right prevails over might, and where relations between states are governed by binding standards, conventions and legislation. The UN's normative function means that the UN system plays a key role in upholding and promoting the international legal order, which in turn promotes peace and human rights. The Organisation is an important political arena for Norway, and the knowledge it generates provides a basis for national and international policy. The UN is an important partner in development, state-building and global crisis management. The legitimacy deriving from its virtually universal membership gives it a unique position among international organisations.

Norway's work in the UN has a long-term perspective. By building alliances, adopting a strategic approach and being willing to contribute financial support, we have generally succeeded in gaining acceptance for our interests and priorities. This applies particularly to areas where we have experience that is in demand in the UN and its member states.

Norway's UN policy in a changing world

The international legal order and the UN's global role cannot be taken for granted. Geopolitical changes, global challenges and lack of political and financial stability impose new demands on international cooperation and on the UN's ability to adapt and take on new tasks. The present white paper sets out the Government's UN policy in the new era.

Today's challenges are more complex than they were in 1945, when the UN was founded. This calls for a greater capability to manage complexity and to link agendas with responses. Another challenge is that some countries perceive the existing structures as a mechanism that continues and enhances the influence of the traditional major powers. Furthermore, the UN is facing greater competition. New, informal groups like the G20, regional organisations, civil society and also private actors are becoming increasingly prominent in the international arena. There is a growing gap between global challenges, the member states' willingness to seek solutions and collectively finance new and existing measures and institutions, and the UN system's capacity and ability to address the challenges.

The UN agenda and its framework conditions are influenced by a number of global trends such

as population growth, urbanisation, growing disparities between and within countries, migration, pressure on financial contributions resulting from the international financial crisis, and technological developments that are driving change. The UN's future relevance depends largely on whether it can adapt to these developments and address the challenges they represent.

We are heading for a multipolar world. New major powers are emerging and demanding an international system that reflects the realities of today and not the balance of power of 1945. Unless UN reform is perceived as making the Organisation more representative, some new major powers may decide to seek other solutions. One of the challenges for a future world order is to make international organisations more relevant for these emerging powers. The UN therefore needs to identify its strengths and decide on the role it will occupy in global governance. In our view the Organisation needs to concentrate more closely on the partnership dimension, especially with regional organisations and international financial institutions.

In a continually changing landscape, cooperation must be sought on a case-by-case basis, and Norway must seek opportunities to build strong coalitions on issues we have defined as being in our interests. Some alliances are lasting, such as those with other Western countries, especially the Nordic countries. However, geopolitical changes are making closer cooperation with other countries, including emerging powers, more important. At the same time Norway intends to actively support the least developed countries and fragile states. New alliances must be formed both outside and within the UN system.

Norway will pursue a predictable and recognisable policy, with a clear, consistent voice across different forums. We will provide resources, both financial and human, that will move our priorities higher up the agenda.

Norway will draw attention to the need for reform, and we have supported several important reforms that have strengthened and modernised the UN. However, there are still many parts of the UN system that need to be made more effective.

New tasks are continually being imposed on the UN system, new organisations are being established and the system is growing. The member states have a general responsibility for management of the UN, and must show the ability and political will to decide on necessary reforms. Norway will continue to be a driving force for modernising and strengthening the Organisation. In

these efforts there are three bottlenecks in particular: funding, leadership and partnership.

Peace and security

The main objective of the UN's activities is to promote peace and security. The current security challenges are far more complex than those existing at the time the UN Charter was signed. However, the UN has more tools at its disposal than any other organisation, and this makes it the most important actor in the work for global peace and security.

The UN is still the only global body that can authorise the use of force. The events in Libya and Syria have shown that when a crisis arises the world turns to the UN and the Security Council. What the UN achieves in such situations depends on a handful of powerful member states: the permanent members of the Security Council. Reform of the Security Council is therefore a crucial issue for many emerging powers. Norway considers that in principle the Council needs a fundamental reform. The main goal must be to ensure that it has the necessary effectiveness and legitimacy to address threats to international peace and security, while at the same time reflecting the global balance of power and becoming more representative. Permanent regional representation is one possibility. As long as such fundamental reforms are not supported by the member states, Norway will continue to back the candidacy of individual states to semi-permanent or new permanent places without the power of veto. Pending a major reform, Norway's primary concerns are to ensure that the working methods of the Security Council are transparent and effective, and to strengthen the Council's cooperation with other parts of the UN.

The demand for UN political activities and peacekeeping operations is greater than ever, especially in Africa. Norway will continue its efforts to strengthen the UN's capacity for mediation and conflict prevention, for example in UN political operations such as those in Libya and Nepal. The mandates of peacekeeping operations are becoming increasingly complex and often involve laying a foundation for state-building and long-term peace. Such activities pose major political and operational challenges. The member states disagree on the framework conditions for operations and on how they should be financed. Discussions on how such operations should be equipped and staffed, including by military and police personnel, are difficult. The greater focus

on supporting the justice and security sector has also increased the need for civilian experts. Norway will contribute its expertise in this sector and seek to improve the UN's capacity to form partnerships. Norway considers it important to implement UN Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, and to enhance protection of civilians in connection with peacekeeping operations. The possibility of a joint military contribution to UN-led peace operations is being discussed with the other Nordic countries.

Norway considers that the UN plays a very important role in fragile states; it has the mandate, logistic capacity and experience necessary to operate in difficult situations of this kind. However, although the UN is in a position to lay a foundation for lasting peace and for the strengthening of states and societies, it is the countries themselves that must exercise leadership. A long-term perspective and coordination between international partners are crucial to success. It is also important that the UN strengthens its cooperation with the World Bank and improves its ability to draw on expertise outside the Organisation. Norway's standby rosters NORCAP, NORDEM and the Crisis Response Pool can offer much useful experience.

The work on disarmament and non-proliferation in the UN has come to a halt. Norway will work for a comprehensive reform of the UN's disarmament bodies, strengthen the legal obligations of member states and draw attention to the humanitarian and development consequences of the use of arms and the lack of progress on disarmament issues.

Two of the growing threats to global security are transnational organised crime and terrorism. No country remains unaffected, and Norway therefore believes that the UN should play a role in prevention efforts. We will support the implementation of the UN's Counter-Terrorism Strategy, work for a global strategy for crime prevention, and seek to ensure that the work against illicit capital flows is given priority by the Organisation.

The international legal order, human rights and gender equality

The UN plays a key normative role in the international community. The current international legal order cannot be taken for granted – it needs to be continually upheld and further developed.

One of the most important international instruments is the UN Convention on the Law of

the Sea. It has played a fundamental role in securing and preserving Norwegian interests. Although it is the states themselves that are responsible for fulfilling their obligations under the Convention, the UN has a number of tools at its disposal. We will seek to strengthen the implementation of international law by various means, including monitoring, dispute settlement, capacity-building and, where appropriate, new agreements.

The UN is the most important platform for safeguarding and developing human rights. Although positive developments are taking place in areas where agreement seemed to be impossible, or that were previously taboo, in other areas a number of established rights are under pressure. This applies especially to women's rights, the right to sexual and reproductive health, and the rights of gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and transgender people. Norway will work to uphold and defend established rights.

The UN also has an important responsibility for encouraging the authorities in individual member states to fulfil their obligations, and for assisting states to build their capability to meet their existing obligations. Norway will therefore continue to emphasise the fact that normative work and promotion of human rights in individual countries are important UN mandates. This is a priority for the Government.

Norway was a member of the UN Human Rights Council in the period 2009–2012. The establishment of the Council was an important reform that has appreciably strengthened the work of the UN, especially the Universal Periodic Review system, under which all member states in rotation must submit reports on their human rights practices to the Council. Civil society plays an important role at the sessions of the Council and in reporting human rights violations. During our membership we were able to make our influence felt in a number of important areas.

The UN has also played a major role in the efforts to promote gender equality and women's rights, which have high priority in our overall UN policy. Many member states are interested in hearing about our experience of gender equality. Norway will continue its efforts to ensure that the gender perspective is mainstreamed in UN activities and to follow up a number of important areas such as the Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security and combating sexual violence in armed conflict. Given the growing pressure on sexual and reproductive health and rights, to which the Government attaches great

importance, Norway will also give priority to strengthening the newly established entity UN Women.

UN efforts in the environmental field and in social, economic and humanitarian affairs

Norway considers that the UN plays a key role in the social and economic fields, both as a political arena for adopting common development goals and as an actor in development efforts and humanitarian crises. The UN is also a key partner in Norwegian priority areas such as health, the Government's Climate and Forest Initiative, and clean energy. The specialised agencies are important for our policy in many areas, and cooperate closely with the various ministries.

Norway gives priority to the work in the UN for sustainable development – a field with economic, social development and environmental dimensions. The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio in June 2012 confirmed the necessity of strengthening UN activities in this area. Norway will work for the adoption of specific, global targets for sustainable development and for a strengthening of the institutional framework. These efforts could include for example strengthening the UN Environmental Programme and ensuring that the new forum on sustainable development will be effective.

The time limit for the current Millennium Development Goals is 2015, and discussions on new, post-2015 goals are already under way. Norway believes that the new goals should be as specific and straightforward as the current goals. However, they should also focus more closely on the structural causes of poverty.

Today there are more poor people in middle-income countries than in the very poorest countries. Norway therefore believes that the topic of equitable distribution should be high on the UN agenda. However, we also believe that the states themselves must also take responsibility for poverty reduction through their own redistribution policies and measures.

Issues related to funding, redistribution of responsibilities and burdens, and deciding who is to benefit from UN activities are a source of considerable tension between the member states. The framework conditions for global development cooperation are changing. Aid is becoming less and less significant for financing development, and new actors are playing a more prominent role. As both an actor and a political arena, the UN has

a key role in the new development architecture. A focus should be aimed at equitable distribution and increasing the proportion of state revenues generated in the developing country itself, and the UN should further develop models for cooperation with new actors and middle-income countries. Norway considers participation by civil society, especially children and young people, to be important in this regard.

In the work at country level, the UN is one of many actors. However, Norway believes that the Organisation's role is crucial because of the normative mandate of UN organisations and their obligation to set and promote standards, for example by providing independent expert advice to local authorities. The UN's rights-based approach is particularly important in the efforts to reach vulnerable and marginalised groups. Norway considers that the UN should concentrate more strongly on its strengths, such as provision of expert advice and capacity- and institution-building, rather than on service delivery and small projects. Although the UN's development efforts are fragmented, the reform process "Delivering as One" has strengthened national ownership, strategic planning and cooperation. Norway believes that the UN's main approach in each country should be based on the idea of "One UN", and that the Organisation itself should address the remaining issues in the areas of leadership, administrative procedures and incentives for cooperation.

In the humanitarian field, threats to the personnel of aid agencies are growing. Norway considers it important to ensure greater mainstreaming of humanitarian principles and to strengthen respect for international humanitarian law by expanding the community of humanitarian donors and intensifying the dialogue with countries in the midst of a humanitarian crisis. The large number of new donors and partners make it essential to ensure inclusive cooperation and strengthen partnerships, for example with NGOs and standby rosters such as NORCAP, which is under the auspices of the Norwegian Refugee Council. Now that so many actors are involved, Norway considers that the main responsibility for coordinating humanitarian aid should lie with the UN. The UN cluster system must be strengthened. The humanitarian multi-donor trust fund system has been found to be an effective tool in improving coordination. Norway will continue its work to strengthen humanitarian funding mechanisms and seek to ensure that they are used to a greater extent for financing transition situations.

Results, influence and control

The UN is an important partner in Norwegian development cooperation, not only because UN organisations work in areas to which Norway gives priority, but also because our membership status and participation in governing bodies enables us to influence, control and set priorities for all the activities of the organisation in question. We have devoted considerable resources to professionalising our work on the boards of UN funds and programmes, and together with other donors are continually engaged in improving the organisations and the way they are managed.

The way we fund the UN organisations' activities directly influences the way they function. Earmarking funds makes it more difficult for the organisation to plan strategically and implement the board's priorities. Core contributions are essential and have a number of advantages. On the other hand, earmarking highlights, and makes it easier to decide on, priorities. Norway intends to maintain a high level of core contributions to UN organisations that deliver good results. We will also mobilise other member states to finance the UN. Norway believes that the Organisation should play a role in all interested countries, but that middle-income countries should finance UN presence themselves.

The Government has drawn up criteria for evaluating the various UN organisations, and the results of these evaluations will to a growing extent have budgetary consequences for Norway's voluntary contributions. Norway will seek

to strengthen the organisations in order to improve the results they achieve, both individually and collectively.

A coherent and predictable UN policy

The UN and the international legal order administered by the UN system are of vital importance in addressing global issues such as war and conflict, population growth, climate change, food security, natural disasters and global health. Unexpected events and crises will always arise. It is therefore important for Norway to position itself so as to have access to arenas where such challenges can be addressed. In this time of upheaval, organisations that can promote stability and cooperation are more important than ever. We need predictability and we need meeting places.

To maintain its influence, Norway needs to project a coherent and predictable voice across all relevant forums, a voice that continues to stress our image as a critical friend of the UN and that focuses on improving results at country level. We will advocate reforms in the areas of partnership, leadership and funding that will enable the various UN organisations to function as they should, while at the same time focusing on improving the entities we consider most important for achieving our priorities.

We will continue to take a long-term approach and give financial support to our priority goals. We are in a position to encourage joint solutions, and will work for the continuation of the UN as a strong, relevant and inclusive organisation.

1 Vision and values

1.1 Norway and the United Nations

The UN's main task is to maintain international peace and security. The fundamental democratic values set out in the UN Charter are also those on which Norwegian society is based. Ever since the Organisation was founded in 1945, active UN engagement has been one of the main features of Norway's foreign policy. Membership of the UN has been vital for the promotion of Norwegian interests and values, and our UN engagement has been strongly supported across different governments, in the Storting (the Norwegian parliament) and among the Norwegian people.

Norway's support for the UN is about interests as well as values. In the Government's view an interest-based foreign policy is one that systematically advances the welfare and security of Norwegian society and promotes our fundamental political values. Our foreign and development policy is therefore based on respect for international law and universal human rights, and promotion of the international legal order.

International law and justice are crucial for our ability to promote and safeguard our interests. The UN enjoys a unique legitimacy because every member state has a voice. The Organisation is the only global body that can legitimise the use of force and is the most important arena for seeking intergovernmental solutions to threats against peace and security. The participation of Norwegian shipping in world trade would not have been possible without international rules. Smallpox could not have been eradicated in Norway without international cooperation in the health field. Respect for the Law of the Sea ensures predictability and stability, which is vital for Norway, especially in the High North – the Government's most important strategic foreign policy priority.

In an increasingly interwoven world, as cross-border relations become closer and new global challenges arise, it is important to ensure that international rules and regulation are further developed.

Today, no country or organisation can equal the UN as a global arena for developing the inter-

national legal order and the norms governing relations between states. It is in Norway's interest to support a world order in which the use of force is regulated. It is also in our interest that all states respect international law and have access to arenas where they can meet to agree on common solutions and address disagreements.

The global threats we are facing can only be dealt with if states join together in taking responsibility for them. In our globalised world, where national borders are no protection from disease and epidemics, terrorism, hunger, lack of clean water, poverty, climate change or growing environmental problems, it is in our interest to deal with these and other challenges at the international level. Foreign policy interests are increasingly linked with national policy development.

Norway has considerable room for manoeuvre in the UN. We are perceived as a credible and constructive supporter of the Organisation and as a major financial contributor, especially in the development and humanitarian fields. Norway's experience with multilateral forums has shown that a long-term strategy and the ability to build alliances and think along new lines are essential, regardless of how we work and who we work with.

1.1.1 Norway's UN policy in a changing world

The international legal order and the UN's global role cannot be taken for granted. Geopolitical changes, fresh challenges and lack of political and financial stability impose new demands on international cooperation and on the UN's ability to adapt and take on new tasks.

Today's challenges are more complex than those of 1945, when the UN was founded. Addressing them requires an enhanced ability to deal with complexity and to link agendas with responses. Another problem is that some countries perceive existing international organisations as mechanisms for maintaining and intensifying the influence of the traditional major powers. The global shifts in the balance of power are not yet reflected in formal structures. The UN is also facing greater competition. The influence of new, informal



Figure 1.1 Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon visits Ny-Ålesund, 2009.

Photo: UN Photo/Mark Garten

groups like the G20, regional organisations, civil society and also private actors is becoming increasingly evident in the international arena.

Norway has also changed. We therefore need to review the priorities for our UN engagement and examine what we can do to strengthen the UN as a framework for a multilateral world order based on international law. Norway is one of 193 member states of the UN. We have 5 million inhabitants; the world population is 7 billion. However, our well-defined policy, long-term perspective, credibility and generous contributions have enabled us to exercise a strong influence relative to the size of our population. Multilateral efforts are taking up greater resources as the landscape becomes increasingly complex. This means that we must give some issues priority over others and focus on areas where we can make a difference. At the same time, we have found the breadth of our engagement to be an advantage, both for our reputation in multilateral forums and for identifying and exploiting opportunities to act when necessary.

Our predictable, long-term policy in key areas promotes our positive image. In a time when power is shared between a number of different

actors, making conflicts of interest more likely, it is crucial to maintain clear positions and priorities if we are to address a larger number of agendas and find alliance partners that will support our priorities. We must prepare for new situations by defining strategies and identifying potential supporters in advance, so that we can take advantage of opportunities when they arise.

1.1.2 A well-equipped toolbox: the UN's many roles and functions

The UN is an organisation of sovereign states. Every part of the UN system is governed by member states, which decide on mandates, programmes and budgets, and finance the Organisation's activities. Through their membership, the states have committed themselves to the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and consequently to certain rules of conduct.

The UN has three main functions: It has a normative function, creating the norms and rules that make up the international legal order. It has a political function, being the arena where virtually



Figure 1.2 Palais des Nations, Geneva. The Afghan Minister of Labour speaking at the ILO Labour Conference.

Photo: United Nations Association of Norway/Hasse Berntsen

all types of issues may be put on the agenda. It has an operational function, performing tasks in accordance with mandates from the member states.

Normative function: Most of the conventions and other legislation that make up the international legal order originated in the UN. Today the network of instruments of international law, declarations and global standards establish the basic rules of conduct for relations between states, which define the obligations of member states towards their own people and other countries. A number of mechanisms have been set up to monitor states' implementation of these obligations. This normative function also gives several of the UN organisations and entities an important role as advocates.

UN norms and principles derive their significance from the fact that they are discussed and negotiated with all the member states around the table and adopted by consensus or a two-thirds majority. However, this also means that negotiating processes can be extremely difficult. It took 10 years to negotiate the UN Declaration on the

Rights of Indigenous Peoples, but in the end it was adopted by consensus. This gives the Declaration great legitimacy.

Political arena: The UN is the only organisation with universal membership, where the members can raise virtually all types of issues. This gives the Organisation an authority and a representativeness that are unique in the world today. Every member state has a voice in the General Assembly, regardless of its size and political and economic power. The UN is perceived by many small and medium-sized states as being democratic and providing legitimacy, whereas larger states may find it unreasonable that their vote has no more weight than that of a small island state. Summits, the General Assembly and other general conferences set the agenda on vital global issues. Most importantly, the UN is an arena where sovereign states, but also civil society, the academic community, indigenous peoples and other interest groups, meet to negotiate and influence decisions. Norwegian NGOs and research communities are active in the UN and participate in several forums,



Figure 1.3 Maban County, South Sudan, July 2012.

Photo: Jake Dinneen

either independently or as part of official delegations.

Operational function: The UN system performs tasks on behalf of the member states, for example in the management of global crises such as armed conflicts, humanitarian crises and epidemics. This requires standby systems and active crisis prevention efforts. These development and humanitarian efforts are the UN's operational activities. The specialised agencies and UN funds and programmes provide expert advice, undertake capacity- and institution-building, and deliver services. Many of these bodies also perform tasks in basic social sectors such as health and education.

The growing need to address new and existing challenges has led to a corresponding expansion of the UN system. Norway has actively supported the establishment of many new institutions, but considers it an important principle that new entities should replace existing ones rather than adding to the number of institutions. A good example is the establishment of UN Women, which replaced four different entities. However, it has proved difficult to close down or merge organisations that particular member states helped to establish and for which they consequently have a strong feeling of ownership.

The growth in the number of institutions has resulted in a large and fragmented system with considerable coordination problems. The Government considers this to be one of the main challenges facing the UN today, and we are giving it high priority in our work for reform.

The financial crisis has put pressure on the funding of multilateral activities. Tighter budg-

ets have resulted in demands for better documentation of development aid results and a stronger focus on getting value for money. Norway is working together with other donors to improve the capacity of UN organisations to document their results and show that they have used the funds effectively. Norway intends to maintain a high level of financial contributions to organisations that deliver, and to penalise those that do not. We will also mobilise new donors.

1.1.3 The shifting balance of power – consequences for the UN as an arena for negotiation

It has been said that when the Cold War ended, the world experienced a unipolar moment. Only 20 years later, the global landscape has become far more complex. A number of countries have experienced rapid economic growth, especially China, but also India and Brazil. So far the various countries' increase in economic and technological weight has only to a limited extent been matched by political influence, but history shows that an increase in economic power over time translates into increased political power. The current debt and financial crisis in the Western countries has probably sped up the current shift of power, and countries both to the east and to the south are becoming more prosperous and gradually more powerful. However, these new global power relations have so far not manifested themselves in the UN system. The traditional roles and groupings of the emerging powers have remained unchanged, and the polarisation between North and South remains the same.

UN activities are influenced by the balance of power between the member states at any given time. In cases where the Security Council cannot arrive at a decision, it is because the member states do not agree. The relevance and influence of an emerging power are decided by its approach to the UN as a whole and to its different institutions and views on important issues. If Norway is to maintain its influence and gain acceptance for its interests and priorities in the UN and its activities in the years ahead, the Government needs a sound understanding of the positions of the various actors and to be able to build alliances with different member states.

New and traditional major powers. In general, major powers take a more selective approach to multilateral institutions than smaller countries, which are more dependent on rule-based interna-

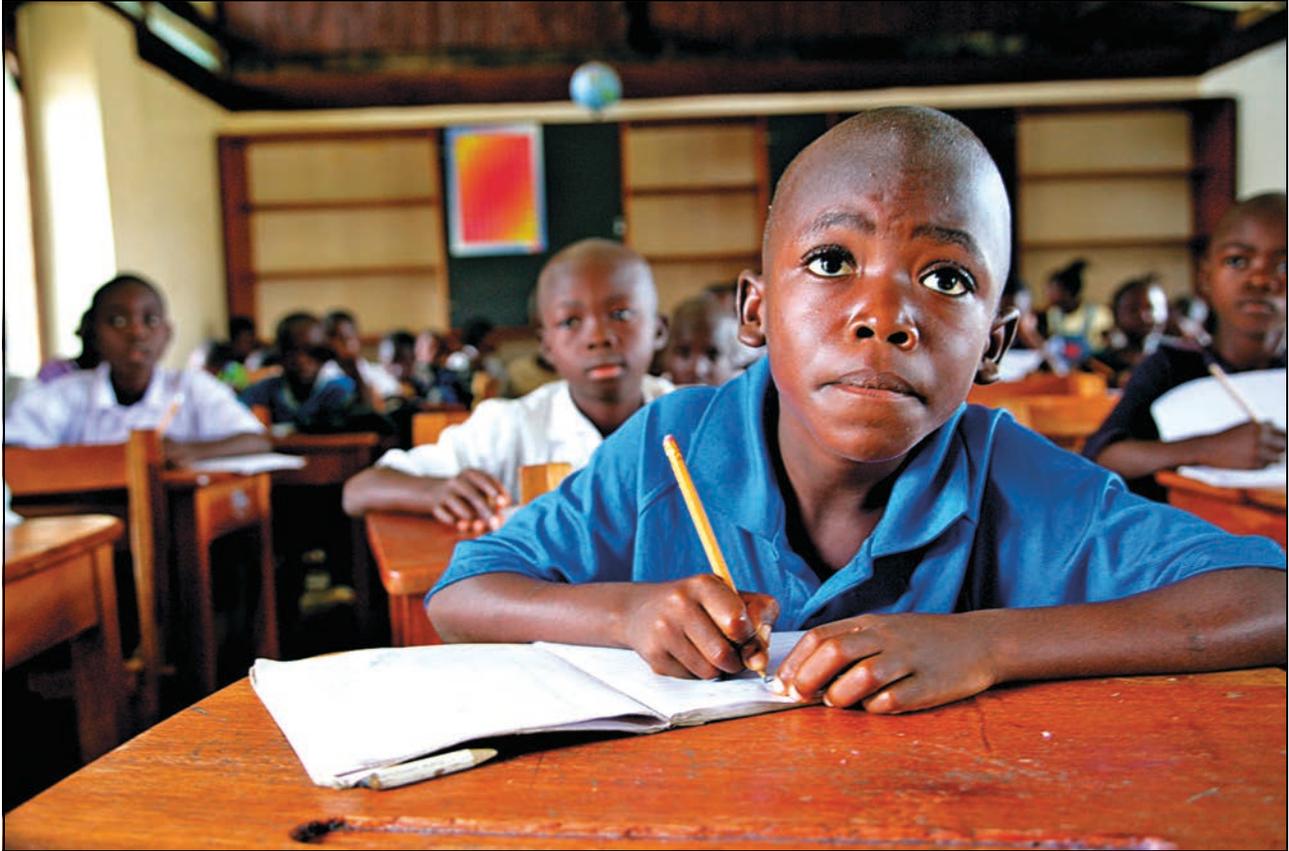


Figure 1.4 Liberia.

Photo: UNICEF/Giacomo Pirozzi

tional cooperation. The question now arises whether the current emerging powers will follow the example of the older ones. The five permanent members of the Security Council (China, France, Russia, the US and the UK) still play a very significant role in the UN.

No other country has anything like the same possibility to influence the international agenda as the US. Under the Obama Administration, the US has had a stronger focus on the UN and has paid its arrears to the Organisation. The US and certain European countries have been part of the first group of major powers since the beginning, and have shown varying degrees of support for the UN system. They finance most of the regular UN budget and operational activities. The question now is whether the US and a Europe in financial crisis are still willing to take on the burden of global leadership they have borne since the end of the Second World War. So far no other country seems to be ready to play a leadership role.

China and Russia, as permanent members of the Security Council, also belong to the group of major powers, and have made use of the UN when they have considered it expedient. They have

taken fewer initiatives, put fewer issues on the agenda, and in general defended the status quo. A number of emerging powers have expressed the wish that the UN and the international financial institutions should to a greater extent reflect the reality of a multipolar world. The UN is an important institution for balancing the interests of major powers. Negotiations in the UN are marked by both offensive and defensive interests and exercise of power. The Western countries have traditionally taken the offensive and been drivers of international cooperation by taking new initiatives and putting new issues on the agenda. Examples of defensive interests are curbing development in particular areas or preventing new issues from being raised. All the member states have offensive and defensive interests in relation to the UN. If all the major actors concentrate purely on their own interests, one of the consequences of the financial crisis could be a greater pulverisation of responsibility.

The emerging powers are not a uniform group, and have their own agendas on peace and security, trade, global governance, environment and development. The UN is generally regarded

by these states as an important arena for addressing certain global challenges, primarily because of the principles of sovereign equality and non-intervention laid down in the UN Charter. Generally speaking, most of the emerging powers have a national focus and make use of the institutions where they consider it expedient. A number of the states in this group consider reform of the Security Council to be an overriding issue, and claim that it is necessary in order to maintain the legitimacy of the UN. However, these countries lack a common approach to the content of such reform. Although agreement on the content of reform is unlikely within the next few years, the countries are likely to keep up their demands for reform. They are also demanding more proportional representation in other forums, and in particular that their interests and issues are reflected on the agenda. If reforms are not undertaken, this could over the long term weaken the UN's relevance for these countries and thereby its relevance as a global actor.

There are several possible scenarios for the time to come: 1) the emerging powers will make more use of the UN in areas where it suits their national interests, 2) they will give preference to multilateral forums and informal groups in order to gain more influence on international affairs, or 3) they will make more use of bilateral relations. The consequence of the last two scenarios will be to marginalise the UN.

Group dynamics and governance challenges.

Negotiations in the UN usually take place between two blocs – North and South. The G77 and the Non-Aligned Movement include a varying number of the developing countries and China, depending on the issue in question. The North includes the Western countries, mainly represented by the EU and the US. At the same time certain countries, like Norway, Mexico, Switzerland and New Zealand, often have a more flexible approach and are able to help engineer compromises. Since the EU achieved a new status in the General Assembly after the adoption of the Treaty of Lisbon, it often speaks and negotiates as a single voice on behalf of its member states.

An undesirable consequence of the two-bloc system is that it is often the countries with the most uncompromising views that have the greatest influence. This tends to result in polarised positions, making negotiations difficult and sometimes halting them altogether, for example in discussions on funding.

Although most negotiations in the UN are conducted between blocs, the dynamics vary depending on the forum concerned. The general meetings of the specialised agencies, the boards of the UN development and humanitarian organisations, and other, more technical, groups are less prone to politics and polarisation.

1.1.4 Global governance, organisation and division of labour

New needs and the ineffectiveness (genuine or perceived) of existing UN organisations have led to strong growth in the number of actors in the international arena in the last few decades, mainly outside the formal organisations, to which all countries have access. A number of political processes and decisions are being shifted to new arenas and actors such as the G8 and the G20. Informal summit meetings are continually being held that compete for the attention, resources and implementation capacity of the different countries. UN member states are drawn towards other forums. And actors such as private funds and foundations are seeking to exert more influence in intergovernmental forums.

Informal groups and networks. When the G20 emerged as the main global actor in connection with the financial crisis, it was feared that it would intervene in areas that were part of the UN's sphere of influence. This fear was founded on the fact that the G20 is a self-appointed organisation whose members represent 80 % of the global economy and also of the world's population. Furthermore the UN has not in principle been given the mandate or the competence to play a strong role in the macroeconomic field. On the other hand, the Organisation is in fact playing a role in efforts to deal with crises in connection with the possibility of global recession, for example as a catalyst for new ideas in the economic field and as a watchdog for established rules and standards. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), for example, served as a catalyst for an inclusive green economy by its prompt action in setting agendas and making knowledge available. The debt and unemployment crisis that has so deeply affected parts of Europe and the US has forced the international community to think along new lines about employment and growth. The UN's role, as represented by the specialised agencies ILO and UNIDO and through its relations with the multilateral financial institutions, has become more relevant owing to the fact that the

Box 1.1 The International Labour Organization (ILO) and decent work

The ILO has developed a system of international labour standards which is maintained through the ILO conventions and backed up by a supervisory system to ensure their application at national level. The Government has given priority to decent work in foreign, development and trade policy. Promoting decent work includes combating child labour, forced labour and discrimination, and promoting freedom of association, gender equality and the right to collective bargaining. The fundamental principles and rights at work safeguard fundamental human rights and promote the sustainable development of society.

The Government's decent work strategy was launched in 2008. It is based on the ILO decent work agenda, which has four strategic objectives: employment creation, rights at work, social protection and social dialogue. Norway is also a large contributor to development programmes promoting decent work at country level, in which ILO cooperates with the authorities and the social partners.

crisis has a high place on the agenda and that the member states are developing new policies to address it.

The G20 is to a growing extent seeking partnership with the UN in cases where the mandate and knowledge of the Organisation and its specialised agencies are relevant. The Secretary-General and various UN organisations are involved in G20 processes and are given tasks by the G20. As the world's 24th largest economy, Norway is interested in influencing discussions and decisions in the G20, and we have put forward a proposal for joint Nordic representation. The Norwegian Foreign Minister participated in a meeting prior to the G20 meeting in Mexico. We will continue to seek contact and influence in the G20, and our goal is joint Nordic representation on a permanent basis.

Shifting power relations and new ambitions can lead to greater competition. The existence of a larger number of equal actors may make it more difficult to reach agreement. When emerging powers do not feel they have sufficient influence in the UN, they may seek other forums and form

other groups, such as the BRICS¹ countries, the IBSA² Dialogue Forum and the BASIC³ cooperation. So far there are few indications of systematic coordination between different groupings within the UN, but the IBSA countries coordinated their positions during the period when they were all members of the Security Council. If these forms of cooperation are institutionalised and are preferred to existing UN institutions, they are likely to weaken the latter's relevance. An example of this form of cooperation is the idea of the BRICS development bank.

Regionalisation. Chapter VIII of the UN Charter opens the possibility of regional cooperation arrangements within the UN. Regional actors are becoming stronger, and several have developed cooperation mechanisms, common approaches and standards on for example economic and environmental issues, use of resources, human rights and crisis management. Among the most important are the African Union, NATO, ECOWAS, the Arab League, ASEAN and the EU.

Regional and sub-regional solutions are often more effective than global solutions. For example, the UN cooperates with regional organisations on crisis management, and provides capacity-building expertise and technical advice to strengthen the regional organisations' crisis management capability and ability to participate in peace operations. Regional organisations are often in a good position to assist in crisis management due to their presence, knowledge of the challenges, experience of how to reach solutions, and understanding of the intentions of neighbouring states. Regional actors often operate with a mandate from the Security Council and in line with the UN's normative framework. There is a strong focus on this work in the UN system, and active efforts are being made to further strengthen the cooperation.

Norway considers it important to continue its efforts to ensure that the work of regional organisations is based on the international legal order and negotiated global standards and norms.

Non-state actors: philanthropic organisations, the private sector and civil society. The growing influence of non-state actors and markets

¹ Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

² India, Brazil and South Africa – a coordinating mechanism between these three democratic, multi-ethnic, multicultural emerging economies with a focus on inclusion, development, human rights and the rule of law.

³ Brazil, India, South Africa and China – an alliance for cooperation in climate negotiations.

is a factor for change that is affecting the UN. The Organisation is to an increasing extent participating in public–private cooperation with global foundations and the private sector. Civil society and NGOs also play important roles in setting agendas and as watchdogs and partners *in implementation*.

Private actors like global funds and large foundations such as the Gates Foundation are becoming increasingly important in the development field and provide substantial funding for development, some of which is channelled through UN agencies. The global funds were established to answer the need for more targeted action in strategic areas, and have produced good results. However, a challenge for the UN, as an intergovernmental organisation, is that actors that make major contributions are seeking to influence priorities and the use of funds, and are having a growing influence on political agendas. In order to continue to attract financing from these private actors, the UN will have to allow them a certain degree of influence. However, it is important that, while opening the possibility of new forms of cooperation, the Organisation should ensure that these are based on the UN normative framework. A frequent solution is to establish new initiatives or public–private partnerships outside established institutions, although lack of capacity to follow up initiatives is also a problem. Norway has played a leading role in several such initiatives and is making efforts to ensure that private actors can participate as far as possible in discussions in established forums.

The UN also serves as initiator and catalyst for contact between the private sector and developing countries interested in investment, although it has a smaller role in implementation and service delivery. The growing prominence of the private sector in the UN is making it necessary to discuss how to impose international obligations on non-state actors. This is being debated in several arenas, including the UN Guiding Principles on Human Rights and Business, and ILO, which has a tripartite structure consisting of government, employers and worker representatives. The interface between the UN system and the private sector also includes the UN Global Compact, which is open for participation by governments, companies, business associations, labour organisations and civil society. The Global Compact is founded on 10 universally accepted principles in the areas of human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption. Norway has played a leading role in

Box 1.2 Cooperation with global funds in the health sector

The establishment of global schemes and funds was the result of the need to mobilise more resources and achieve results more rapidly and effectively by targeting specific areas. At the same time, it was made a condition that the efforts should be based on the UN's normative mandate. The multilateral health organisations are therefore co-owners of the global funds on a par with donors from the private, public and voluntary sectors. The global funds have been criticised for fragmenting aid efforts and undermining the UN system by assuming tasks that should really be performed by the UN. On the other hand, the funds have provided substantial increases in resources and improved performance management.

the Global Compact and in the work on corporate social responsibility.

Civil society plays many different roles in relation to the UN system: initiator, driving force and pressure group for the adoption of new norms and standards, watchdog to ensure that member states comply with their commitments, and implementation partner on the ground in development and humanitarian operations. Civil society's engagement in the Human Rights Council has a role in holding states accountable, and reports from civil society have the status of formal documents in the Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Reviews. In addition, over 3 000 NGOs have consultative status in ECOSOC. In some cases NGOs also have access to other UN forums, for example in open debates in the Security Council and the Human Rights Council. Norwegian NGOs and academic institutions are actively involved in the UN system as participants in UN forums, partners in the field and contributors to reform through research and participation in various processes.

Civil society organisations are important agents of change for promoting human rights on behalf of the population as a whole and of vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities, people living with HIV, and girls and women who have undergone female genital mutilation. Globalisation and modern technology have given civil society a much stronger voice, which means that UN member states are forced to take civil society



Figure 1.5 Round-table conference with Egyptian youth activists and Secretary-General Ban-Ki-moon. Cairo, Egypt, 2011.

Photo: UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe

actors into account to a much greater degree than before. Not all member states wish to hear a strong voice from these actors at UN meetings, and attempts are continually being made to restrict their access, most recently during the negotiations on the Arms Trade Treaty in summer 2012. Norway considers that civil society, including NGOs, has an especially important role in contributing country-level views and experience to global discussions, and will continue to advocate that these actors have general access to UN meetings. In cases where access is restricted, Norway will seek to have representatives of civil society included in national delegations. We should also work for an agenda where the UN in the field promotes the establishment of arenas for civil society and mechanisms for enabling these actors to influence national policies.

The UN system. The international financial institutions, the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the International Atomic Energy Agency and a number of other organisations that were established through negotiations under UN auspices are

related to the UN. They are autonomous bodies but have special agreements with the UN and are part of ECOSOC. They also participate in the UN Chief Executives Board, an advisory body for the Secretary-General that promotes coherence and cooperation within the UN system.

Enhanced cooperation and contact is needed between the UN on the one hand and the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on the other. At the intergovernmental level, a closer dialogue is needed between the UN General Assembly and the boards of the World Bank and the IMF. A high-level conference hosted by Prime Minister Stoltenberg was held in Oslo in autumn 2010 on the challenges to the international labour market posed by the financial crisis, which left millions of people out of work. The conference was arranged in cooperation with ILO and the IMF.

The World Bank should also cooperate more closely with the UN at country level. The two organisations still have overlapping mandates and compete in many areas instead of agreeing on a division of labour and cooperating on common

Box 1.3 The International Energy and Climate Initiative, Energy+, and Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All)

The Government's Energy+ initiative was launched by Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg and UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at a conference in Oslo in 2011 entitled Energy for All: Financing Access for the Poor. A total of 1.3 billion people lack access to modern forms of energy, but at the same time it is crucial to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions. Energy+ aims to address this challenge by using development aid to reward developing countries whose efforts to provide universal access to sustainable energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions have shown results. Development aid will also be used to promote far greater private investment in the energy sector. Energy+ is a two-year pilot project, and the Government will decide whether to continue it at the end of the trial period.

A number of countries, international financial institutions, commercial companies, UNDP, UNEP, the World Bank and NGOs, including NORFUND and McKinsey Norge, are partners in Energy+. The project is also a tool for implementing the Secretary-General's initiative Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All), which has three ambitious objectives that are to be fulfilled by 2030: universal access to modern energy services, doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency and doubling the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.

goals. There is a growing tendency for the World Bank to work in areas that have traditionally been regarded as being the sphere of the UN, for example health and education, and in fragile states. Furthermore, many member states pursue contradictory policies in the UN and the World Bank. The Government believes that the World Bank and the UN have different strengths and should play complementary roles, and closer cooperation should therefore be sought in contexts where they both participate. We have put pressure on the organisations to cooperate more closely, and have noted good results in several areas.

1.2 Norway's influence and room for manoeuvre

In a constantly changing landscape, cooperation must be sought on a case-by-case basis, and Norway must seek opportunities to build strong alliances on issues that are in our national interests or of international interest. The Government gives priority to forming new alliances to promote our foreign policy goals.

The US, the Nordic countries and other Western countries in the EU have always been among Norway's closest partners in the UN. Many of our interests and priorities are also shared by Canada, Switzerland, Australia and New Zealand. All these countries will continue to be important partners for Norway.

The most permanent of our alliances has always been our cooperation with the other Nordic countries. However, the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy, which is also being pursued in an increasing number of cases in the UN, is affecting Nordic cooperation. Although Nordic collaboration continues to be close on an informal case-by-case basis, it is naturally influenced by the fact that three of the Nordic countries have to take EU positions into account and are part of EU negotiation dynamics. The exception is participation in the Security Council and the governing boards of UN organisations, where the EU does not speak with one voice and Nordic cooperation is close. Nordic cooperation in UN elections is based on Nordic agreements on rotation arrangements and mutual support in many key UN entities such as the Security Council, the Human Rights Council and ECOSOC. This is of great benefit to Norway, since it means that we are represented more frequently than we would otherwise be. The Nordic countries also discuss joint military contributions to UN peace operations, and cooperate closely in the governing boards of UN funds and programmes, for example on assessing the organisations. The Government will continue to further develop Nordic cooperation.

Geopolitical changes are making it more important than ever for Norway to cooperate more closely with other countries as well as those mentioned above, including emerging powers. We need to identify areas where we have common interests with emerging powers and strengthen our cooperation with these countries through strategic alliances on a case-by-case basis or through more extensive partnerships, such as Norway's climate and forest cooperation with Brazil and Indonesia. These countries are also part of the

Box 1.4 The Millennium Development Goals – examples of Norwegian priority areas

MDGs 2 and 3: Education, with a focus on girls' education

Norway has maintained a focus on girls' education for many years. The target of MDG 2 is to ensure that all children are able to complete primary schooling. Currently nine out of ten children enrol in primary school and 90 % of them complete it. Great progress has been made in sub-Saharan Africa, where school enrolment increased from 58 % to 76 % from 1999 to 2010. The target for MDG 3, eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education, has been reached. Today as many girls as boys enrol in primary school at the global level, although there are still disparities in many individual countries.

Norway was the main contributor to the African Girls' Education Initiative (AGEI). This formed the foundation for UNGEI (UN Girls Education Initiative) and has played a key role in UNICEF's efforts to promote girls' education. In 2012 Norway contributed NOK 550 million to UNICEF's Girls Education Thematic Fund, making us the main contributor to UNGEI. An evaluation of UNGEI showed that the initiative has raised awareness at global, regional and country level of the importance of focusing on gender equality in efforts to promote education.

MDGs 4, 5 and 6: Reducing child mortality, improving maternal health and combating communicable diseases (HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis)

The UN is an important forum and the UN organisations are important partners for Norway in promoting our priorities for the health-related MDGs. Our efforts are particularly directed towards child and maternal health, and prevention and treatment of communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. We also give priority to strengthening health systems, management of pandemics, addressing the global health workforce crisis, protection and promotion of sexual and reproductive health and rights, support for global health-related research and knowledge development, combating female genital mutilation, and, to an increasing extent, combating non-communicable diseases. MDG 5, improving maternal health, is the goal that is furthest from being achieved by 2015, but the 2010 figures show substantial progress, from over half a million deaths a year in 1990 to less than 300 000 in

2010. MDG 4, reducing child mortality, has also shown considerable progress since 1990. Mortality for children under five was reduced by 35 % from 1990 to 2010.

Preventive measures against malaria and better access to vaccination and HIV medicines have contributed substantially to these improvements.

The Global Campaign for the Health Millennium Development Goals was launched in 2007 by Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg. The purpose was to mobilise political support for the health-related MDGs, attract more funding for health care in poor countries and ensure that the money is well spent. In the same year he established a network of 11 heads of state and government to work for these objectives. Cooperation with the UN has played a central role in the Government's efforts to promote these MDGs. In 2010 Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon launched the campaign "Every Woman, Every Child", which brings together states, UN organisations, civil society, professional organisations, research and higher education institutions, and the private sector in a joint effort to implement the Global Strategy for Women's Health. The strategy aims to enhance financing, strengthen policy and improve service on the ground for the most vulnerable women and children. Norway was involved in developing the strategy, and the Government is giving priority to following it up. Vaccination programmes are an important tool in the efforts to achieve the health-related MDGs. In this field the UN organisations, especially WHO and UNICEF, cooperate closely with the GAVI Alliance, to which Norway is a major contributor.

In March 2012 the new UN Commission on Life-Saving Commodities was established (in connection with Global Strategy for Women's Health). The commission works to improve access to life-saving medicines and other health supplies, including contraception, to reduce child and maternal mortality. The commission is co-chaired by Prime Minister Stoltenberg and Nigeria's President Goodluck Jonathan. The commission submitted its final report and recommendations at the UN General Assembly in September 2012.

Since spring 2012 Norway has also been a partner in the cooperation Saving Mothers, Giving Life together with the US and others. The first two pilot countries are Zambia and Uganda.

seven-country cooperation on Global Health and Foreign Policy. UN peacekeeping operations, women, peace and security, conflict resolution, and peace and reconciliation are other important areas for cooperation with emerging powers.

At the same time Norway intends to actively support the least developed countries on a number of issues where our interests coincide, including the environment and climate change, poverty reduction, development and post-conflict reconstruction.

When forming alliances with emerging powers and others, Norway needs to project a clearly defined image at the UN, together with explicit priorities and positions. These should be based on:

- a predictable and recognisable policy in areas where Norway has credibility and experience from which others can benefit,
- a clear, consistent voice across all forums,
- financial and human resources for lifting our priorities higher up the agenda,
- alliances across regional borders, with new actors and with civil society, both from case to case and in the form of long-term strategic alliances and partnerships,
- a willingness to promote new ideas.

A sound analysis of national positions in different thematic areas will be crucial for forming the alliances we need in order to exert influence in the UN of the future. Our foreign service missions will have an important role in linking the dialogue at UN headquarters with capitals. Building alliances in the UN is to an increasing extent taking place outside UN forums, with important partners at the capital level. An example of targeted efforts by Norway was the initiative for a new global agreement between port states to combat illegal fishing. Within three years of the decision in the General Assembly, a binding agreement between the parties was reached under the auspices of FAO. The work was financed by Norway, and the Port State Measures Agreement establishes international minimum port states measures based on the Norwegian system.

Norway will continue its policy of seeking close contact with institutions and civil society, and will serve as a door opener for civil society in UN meetings and processes. Access to these is under pressure from countries that wish to avoid critical voices by closing UN meetings and processes on the grounds of the principle of sovereignty. The rules of procedure do not allow NGOs

Box 1.5 Norway as an advocate of UN reform

Norway has played a leading role in the efforts to integrate UN peacemaking activities with other parts of the UN system. These efforts have resulted in substantial changes both at headquarters and in the field, in the form of a common framework for identifying the needs to be taken into account when planning peace operations. As a result UN peacekeeping efforts are better coordinated with humanitarian operations. Planning and coordination focus on short- and long-term humanitarian needs and on the more long-term development agenda in fragile states in or emerging from conflict. The establishment of the Mediation Support Unit, and the Standby Team of Mediation Experts initiated and supported by Norway, has strengthened the capacity for conflict prevention of the Secretary-General and the Secretariat. A new model has been set up for coordinating and financing humanitarian assistance.

Norway has made a substantial contribution to reform of the UN development system. As early as 1996 the Nordic project for UN reform contained a proposal that the UN should integrate its development efforts at country level. Ten years later Prime Minister Stoltenberg was co-chair of the High-Level Panel on System-Wide Coherence to strengthen UN development efforts. The Panel's report, *Delivering as One*, has resulted in extensive changes in the way UN organisations work at country level, and strengthened host countries' sense of ownership. The Panel also proposed the establishment of a new entity to coordinate and administer the UN's work on women's rights and gender equality. UN Women, which was established in 2010, was a merger of four previously separate parts of the UN system. The new entity was a considerable step forward in the reform process and a victory for the efforts to promote women's rights and gender equality.

to become members of boards or participate in decision-making processes at the intergovernmental level. We will work to prevent attempts to close debates and processes, and defend the adoption of an open approach to access by civil society.

1.3 Strengthening the UN and making it more effective

The UN of today is quite different from what it was at the end of the Cold War. Former Secretary-General Kofi Annan stated that reform is a process, not an event. In order to address the new challenges and framework conditions, all UN organisations must continually adapt and change. Reform needs to be part of the organisation's day-to-day activities. Sometimes the need arises for a major reorganisation, usually in the wake of major upheavals or crises. Today the UN faces a twofold challenge: internal power relations need to reflect current realities more closely, and the international community's ability to control and regulate more complex global problems needs to be improved. It is in the interests of Norway and like-minded countries to follow both tracks.

Norway's interest in well-functioning multilateral institutions and as a major contributor to the UN has made it an advocate of reform from the start.

Demands for UN reform have been put forward ever since the Organisation was founded. One of the most widespread criticisms is that the UN system is inefficient and bureaucratic. There can be no doubt that the way the UN is managed should be improved. The Secretariat and the various funds, programmes and specialised agencies have problems due to inefficiency, lack of proper documentation of results, and bureaucratic (sometimes antiquated) administrative systems and procedures. Areas such as human resources management, recruitment, internal control and transparency need to be considerably improved. Simplification and harmonisation of administration across the UN system are essential, since the various organisations have different administrative systems and procedures. Norway is working for reform in these areas.

At the ideological level, conservative voices have alleged that the UN restricts states' freedom of action. Critics at both ends of the North–South spectrum fear the development of supranational governance on the one hand and rejection of attempts to regulate what are perceived as internal affairs on the other. The conservative right in the US has accused the UN of aiming at world governance, while critics in the South accuse the Organisation of serving the interests of the Western countries and practising neocolonialism and imperialism. The latter seek to maintain control

Box 1.6 Financing the UN

- The UN regular budget: USD 5.15 billion with a two-year budget cycle (NOK 15.7 billion a year)
- The UN peacekeeping budget: USD 7.6 billion (NOK 44 billion) in 2012
- UN operational activities (development, humanitarian assistance): USD 22 billion (NOK 134 billion) in 2010

Norway's contribution in 2012 is 0.871 % of the total budget, and consists of NOK 121.3 million to the regular budget and NOK 380 million to the peacekeeping budget. Norway's total contribution to UN development and humanitarian activities was NOK 7 billion in 2011. We are one of the three largest donors to UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA, but our contributions do not amount to more than 5 % of the organisations' total income.

Mandatory contributions and assessment scale: The regular and peacekeeping budgets of the UN are covered by the member states' mandatory contributions. These are assessed according to each state's ability to pay, and the minimum assessment rate is 0.001 %, with a maximum assessment rate of 22 %, of the regular budget (or 25 % of the peacekeeping budget). The assessment rates are based mainly on GNI, but exceptions are made, for example for countries with a high debt level or in the event of longer-term economic changes (based on average statistical base periods of three and six years). Because of the exceptions, the world's second largest economy, China, is assessed at 3.189 % of the regular budget, while the assessment rates for the US, which is the world's largest economy, are 22 % of the regular budget and 25 % of the peacekeeping budget. The assessed contributions from the permanent members of the Security Council account for a larger share of the peacekeeping budget than of the regular budget, and those from the least developed countries a smaller share. For the other member states the assessment rates are the same. The EU countries pay a total of around 40 % of the regular budget (their share of the world economy is 30 %), Japan pays 12.53 % and India pays 0.534 %. The assessment rates are reviewed every third year.

through overregulation, especially through the UN Budget Committee (the Fifth Committee), while the former deny that the UN has any relevance and argue in favour of going it alone.

The member states have the overall responsibility for management of the UN. Only they can decide that a particular task should be given less priority. Reviewing and removing some of the thousands of tasks the member states have imposed on the UN would make the Organisation more efficient, but the member states lack the political will to take control and to act consistently across the different forums. The freedom of action and ability of the Secretary-General and other UN leaders to make changes in the organisation are hampered by the detailed rules imposed by member states.

Reform fatigue in the UN and a widespread scepticism about comprehensive reform mean that changes will continue to be introduced in small steps. The Secretary-General is in the process of making administrative changes. Better recruitment procedures that ensure that the right person is in the right place at the right time, greater transparency, result-oriented budgets and simpler administrative systems and procedures at

headquarters level are being introduced. The Secretary-General has Norway's full support in these efforts.

There are three areas in particular where UN organisations need to be strengthened: financing, leadership and partnership. How can we ensure that the resources match the mandate and that UN activities are financed in a way that promotes effectiveness? How can we ensure on the one hand that the member states assume clear ownership and management, and on the other that the central- and country-level heads of UN organisations are made responsible for achieving results? How can we make the UN more attractive as a partner and ensure that it has the flexibility necessary to form the most beneficial partnerships? The Government intends to strengthen the UN in all three areas, and these questions will be discussed extensively in the thematic chapters below.

If the UN is to play a key role in the years ahead, this will require not only a willingness to act on the part of UN leaders but also political will and financial support on the part of the member states.

2 Peace and security

Peace and security are at the core of the UN's activities. However, today's security challenges are far more complex than those existing at the time the UN Charter was signed. They include internal armed conflicts, gross violations of international humanitarian law (including genocide) and human rights, poverty, communicable diseases, climate change and environmental damage, weapons of mass destruction, terrorism and organised crime. Multilateral efforts to promote disarmament and non-proliferation are under serious pressure, and could develop into a new nuclear arms race. The situation is intensified by the growing importance of non-state actors.

The complexity of the threats makes it necessary to examine the UN's traditional approach with fresh eyes, and consider equipping the Organisation with a broader set of instruments. For example, the UN's work for economic and social development, and its efforts to promote international humanitarian law and human rights, could be used to address many of the current threats. As in other areas, the success of UN efforts will depend on close cooperation between the UN and other actors, and on involving regional organisations, individual countries and NGOs.

2.1 New threats and patterns of conflict

The statistics for existing conflicts show that conflict resolution and peacebuilding get results. In spite of a slight increase in 2011, the total number of armed conflicts has declined considerably since the UN was founded, and especially since the end of the Cold War. Armed conflict *between states* has become a rare occurrence. Much of the credit for this state of affairs can be attributed to the fact that the UN has been largely successful in its primary task. The number of armed conflicts within states has declined significantly as well, although the number is still considerable. Internal conflicts tend to spill over national borders and affect neighbouring countries. Conflict-affected countries, many of them situated in Africa, are often

poor and the repercussions of a conflict are extensive. There are usually underlying political and economic problems, and in many cases the picture is complicated by organised crime, plundering, and illegal economic activities. Organised crime weakens institutions and makes states vulnerable, a situation that often affects neighbouring countries and other parts of the world. Since most of the victims of existing conflicts are civilians, the result is widespread suffering and hardship, with destroyed livelihoods, displacement, threats and violence, undernourishment, epidemics and other health risks, and a lack of educational services.

Changes in the security picture still pose a major challenge for the UN. Powerful states that choose to exercise their sovereignty are often reluctant to allow the UN to play a role in their internal conflicts. In addition it has been and still is difficult for the UN to assume a clear political role in some of the most prolonged conflicts, like that in the Middle East. Although the issue of the Palestinian Territory is one of the items that most often appears on the UN agenda, the Organisation is not in the best position to lead the political efforts to resolve this conflict. On the other hand, the UN plays an invaluable role in many of the operational activities on the ground.

In spite of these factors, the new conflict patterns also strengthen the UN's relevance, since the Organisation has a greater breadth of tools at its disposal than any other actor. The toolbox for preventing and managing conflicts and supporting fragile states is becoming increasingly well equipped. Norway has played a leading role in this process and will continue to give it priority. We consider it important that the UN develops appropriate norms, strategies and forms of cooperation for addressing new threats.

2.2 The UN Security Council: legitimacy and effectiveness

The Security Council is the most powerful UN institution, and when a serious crisis occurs, this



Figure 2.1 The UN Security Council.

Photo: UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe

is the body to which the world turns. The Council's main task is to maintain international peace and security. It has a broad set of conflict management tools at its disposal, ranging from diplomacy to the offensive use of force, and including mediation, political operations, peacekeeping operations, sanctions and military intervention.

The Security Council consists of five permanent members – the US, Russia, China, the UK and France – which have the power of veto, and 10 non-permanent members elected for two years at a time. However, the Council is only as effective as its 15 members allow it to be. The permanent members have a special responsibility by virtue of their veto power. Norway's most recent term on

Box 2.1 UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security

Since 2000, the Security Council has unanimously adopted five resolutions on women, peace and security (nos 1325, 1820, 1888, 1889 and 1960), all of which acknowledge the importance of women's participation in peace operations, peace processes and post-conflict reconstruction. The resolutions require that girls and women are protected against abuse, and state that sexualised violence can constitute a war crime and a crime against humanity.

Norway has been actively involved in strengthening the implementation of these resolutions. The UN bodies that are intended to

ensure international peace and security are obliged to mainstream a gender perspective and put women's rights on the agenda in conflict situations. Peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts have to address women's needs and draw on women's experience. This applies not only within the UN but also to other organisations tasked with peace operations, such as NATO and the African Union. In 2006 Norway launched an action plan for implementing resolution 1325, and in 2011 more targeted measures were included and a strategic framework was drawn up for its implementation.

the Security Council was in 2001–02, and we will again be a candidate for a non-permanent place for the period 2021–22. We intend to work hard to achieve this, and if we are elected we will put a great deal of time and effort into making a success of our time on the Council.

The new conflict patterns have challenged traditional thinking about security, and new items are being put on the Security Council agenda. The close links between security and development have been recognised, and the Council now discusses questions such as the protection of children in armed conflicts and women’s role in conflicts (see Box 2.1). The Council is an influential norm-setter in these areas. Other items on the Council’s agenda are climate change, health, and transnational organised crime such as smuggling, human trafficking and piracy.

2.2.1 The Responsibility to Protect – state sovereignty versus the international community’s responsibility

A cornerstone of the United Nations Charter is the principle of the sovereign equality of all its member states and the corresponding principle of

non-intervention. However, the prohibition on intervening in the internal affairs of another state is qualified by the provisions of Chapter VII. Article 39 states that: “The Security Council shall determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression.” In such cases the Security Council has the authority to use force. However, in cases of lack of agreement in the Security Council on this issue, the international community has time after time stood helplessly by while genocide, ethnic cleansing and other gross abuses of civilians were being practised inside national borders. At the same time the idea of the fundamental human rights – inviolable and universal – is deeply rooted in the preamble of the UN Charter. As a consequence of the wars in the Balkans and the genocide in Rwanda, it was agreed at the High-Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly in 2005 that the two principles were not necessarily in conflict if the concept of sovereignty was interpreted as “sovereignty as responsibility”. In the Outcome Document the participants committed themselves to the principle of the Responsibility to Protect, which was later reaffirmed by the Security Council.



Figure 2.2 Zawiya, Libya. The one-year anniversary of the start of the anti-Gaddafi uprising.

Photo: UN Photo/Iason Foounten

Box 2.2 The Responsibility to Protect

The principle of the responsibility to protect has a firm basis in international law. Norway supports the broad set of tools required to enforce the principle, especially preventive measures and the use of peaceful means. We advocate the view that the legitimate exercise of power depends on the safeguarding of citizens' fundamental rights, and that preventive international intervention may be justified in the case of states that fail to safeguard these rights. However, Norway also believes that the use of armed force requires a mandate from the UN Security Council.

2.2.2 Reform of the Security Council: legitimacy versus effectiveness?

Reform of the Security Council is *the* single topic that more than any other influences the relations between the member states. The countries of the South are demanding that the membership of the Council should reflect more closely today's geopolitical reality and not the world as it was in 1945. They feel that the existing composition of the Council weakens the Organisation's legitimacy.

The issue is an underlying theme in much of the UN's work, and in many cases creates a difficult negotiation climate in which the lack of Security Council reform is used as an argument to reject reform in other areas. India raised the issue as early as 1980, and most of the member states now agree that reform of the Security Council is necessary. However, intergovernmental negotiations are being blocked by strong disagreement on the composition of the new Security Council, and there is little sign of a breakthrough. The greatest difference is between the views of the G4 countries (India, Brazil, Japan and Germany), which are demanding a permanent place on the Council, and those of the United for Consensus Group (among which are Canada, Italy, Spain, Mexico, Argentina and Pakistan), which will only support an expansion consisting of non-permanent or semi-permanent members. The African countries are demanding both that Africa is given two permanent places and that the number of non-permanent places is increased.

Another central issue in the negotiations is the power of veto – whether the existing permanent members should renounce their veto power and/

or whether new permanent members should be given such power. The existing five permanent members do not wish to renounce their veto and have made it clear that they do not consider that new permanent members should be granted veto power. The G4, especially India, is demanding a permanent place with veto power. The African countries consider that if the five permanent members retain their veto the new permanent members should also be given a veto.

Competition for the non-permanent places has always been stiff, and is becoming even stiffer. This applies particularly to the Western and Other States Group (WEOG), to which Norway belongs, and the Group of Eastern European States. The margins are often very narrow, and states have to submit their candidacy many years in advance.

Norway considers that the Security Council needs a fundamental reform. The main goal must be to ensure that it has the necessary effectiveness and legitimacy to address the threats to international peace and security, while at the same time reflecting the current division of power and having a more representative membership. Permanent regional representation is one possibility. As long as such fundamental reforms are not supported by the member states and the permanent members of the Security Council, Norway will continue to back the candidacy of individual states to semi-permanent or new permanent places without a veto. Norway considers it important that the model that is finally chosen does not compromise the Council's ability and willingness to act when action is called for. We will promote discussion of the different reform models and will maintain close contact with influential countries.

Another central topic in the debate on reform is the need to ensure greater transparency in the work of the Security Council. Norway has played an active role in these discussions. We support measures to increase transparency and involvement of non-members in the Council's work, for example by strengthening the dialogue with the General Assembly, open monthly briefings by the Presidency, more information to non-members on peacekeeping operations, and closer dialogue with countries deploying police and military personnel in operations. We support the proposal that the five permanent members should explain their reasons for exercising their veto, and that they refrain from exercising it if this would block decisions to prevent or halt genocide, war crimes or crimes against humanity.

Since 2005, Norway has supported the not-for-profit organisation *Security Council Report*, which

Box 2.3 Sanctions as a tool

Many member states are sceptical about the use of sanctions. It is claimed that they affect innocent third parties and constitute intervention in internal matters. However, a distinction must be made between the actual effects of implementing sanctions and whether imposing sanctions will achieve the political goal in question. There is a need for better understanding of how the different mechanisms can be used to achieve the different goals and for a global dialogue on the subject, for example on how the economic repercussions of sanctions should be dealt with, especially when energy issues are involved.

makes information on the Council's work available to member states. The organisation publishes reports that reach a broad public and makes a valuable contribution to transparency and debate on the Council's activities.

The Government will

- work for reform of the Security Council to make it more legitimate and effective,
- support efforts to improve the Council's working methods and make them more efficient,
- seek to enhance cooperation between the Security Council and other parts of the UN system.

2.3 The UN's peacebuilding toolbox

The UN's peacebuilding toolbox comprises prevention, mediation, political operations, sanctions, peace operations and peacebuilding.

Today, peace operations are not only intended to promote security, they are also expected to facilitate humanitarian assistance and promote peacebuilding and long-term development. Norway therefore considers it important to strengthen the UN's capacity to fulfil the comprehensive mandates adopted by the Security Council, including the ability to maintain a focus on women and to take general human rights considerations into account. Much remains to be done before UN peacekeeping operations effectively fulfil and are in practice integrated with all the terms of their mandates. This will involve addressing the political and operational challenges discussed below. Norway will continue to actively

support this process, in particular by emphasising women's role in peace operations and peacebuilding, protection of civilians, and the need to safeguard humanitarian principles and the independence and freedom of action of humanitarian actors.

2.3.1 Political operations: prevention and mediation

The UN is in a particularly good position to act as mediator because it is perceived as impartial, without special interests that would be affected by the outcome of the process. The UN's capacity has been considerably strengthened by the establishment of the Mediation Support Unit (MSU) under the Department of Political Affairs, and the UN Standby Team of Mediation Experts, established with support from Norway (see Box 2.5). The UN is also in a good position to play a coordinating role in conflicts where many different actors are involved in providing assistance.

Mediation and conflict prevention are central elements of Norwegian foreign policy, and our experience of mediation and facilitation in conflict areas such as Nepal, Sudan, the Middle East and Sri Lanka makes us an interesting partner for the UN. We work closely with the Organisation on prevention and diplomacy in a number of countries, and will give this work high priority in the time to come.

For several years Norway has been putting pressure on the Department of Political Affairs to place more emphasis on women's role in conflict prevention and resolution. We have financially supported the UN's strategy for strengthening the role of women in peace negotiations and increasing the number of women peace mediators, and have funded the inclusion of an expert on gender equality in the Standby Team of Mediation Experts. We are promoting the efforts to protect women during and after armed conflicts, including the development of guidelines for including the issue of sexualised violence in ceasefire and peace agreements. The guidelines are intended to reduce the widespread use of impunity for this type of crime during and after conflicts. These efforts have resulted in a far greater focus on this issue, and we will maintain our engagement.

Norway has also worked for many years on strengthening the UN's early warning mechanisms as a conflict prevention measure. The issue is a sensitive one, since many countries are suspicious of arrangements that could come into conflict with the principle of sovereignty. One of our

Box 2.4 Reform processes and Norwegian support

The UN's peacekeeping capacity has been considerably strengthened in the last 10 years. The Organisation as a whole has addressed the challenges that arose in the wake of the crises in Somalia, Rwanda and the Balkans during the 1990s.

Norway has played an active role in the reforms that were and still are being implemented on the basis of the Brahimi Report of 2000, and has helped to develop the multidimensional, integrated approach that characterises peace operations today. Under this approach, all UN organisations engaged in peacekeeping on the ground cooperate with one another under the leadership of the Special Representative of

the Secretary-General. The Special Representative has two deputy special representatives, who are responsible for development and humanitarian organisations, and for the political functions related to the operation, respectively. They draw up joint plans and are responsible for implementing the UN mandate on the ground.

Norway is a supporter and driving force in the development of guidelines for security sector reform and police work in peace operations. We also support the development of peacekeeping standards that define the results that can be expected from the various groups of personnel in the field. The aim is to make peacekeeping efforts more effective.

main priorities in the time ahead will be to boost the UN's capacity not only for early warning but also for early action.

The fact that UN political operations are financed over the regular budget, while many of the activities have to be financed by voluntary contributions, is a serious problem that results in lack of predictability. Norway will therefore actively promote the adoption of funding mechanisms for adequate and predictable financing of political activities, primarily by seeking to ensure that a larger share of political operations is financed over the regular budget.

2.3.2 Peacekeeping operations

Peacekeeping operations are the most central tool used by the UN to promote international peace and security, and it is in Norway's interest that the Organisation continues to conduct such operations.

Around 116 000 personnel are currently serving in 15 UN-led peacekeeping operations, most of them in Africa. The peacekeeping budget for the period 2012–13 is about NOK 44 billion, to which Norway contributes 0.871 %, or about NOK 382 million. The growth in peacekeeping operations has resulted in serious political and operational challenges, which must be solved if the UN is to continue to be relevant and effective at country level.

The political challenges of peacekeeping operations are linked to the question of which tasks the

operations are mandated to perform, how much force is to be used, especially for protection of civilians, and what financial resources should be made available for the operations.

Since the mid-1990s, countries in the South have been largely responsible for supplying the uniformed personnel in UN peace operations, while countries in the North have been by far the

Box 2.5 The UN Standby Team of Mediation Experts

With funding from Norway and practical support from the Norwegian Refugee Council, the UN has established a multinational team of experts that can be deployed within 72 hours. The number has now been expanded thanks to EU support. The Norwegian Refugee Council and the UN Department of Political Affairs cooperate closely on management of the team. The Standby Team has been involved in more than 50 processes in every part of the world, for example in Yemen and Syria. UN special envoys, political and peacekeeping operations, UN resident representatives and regional organisations have all made use of its services. In summer 2010, the Refugee Council commissioned an external evaluation of the Standby Team, which concluded that it is a valuable resource, and emphasised the importance of using professionals who possess the necessary expertise.



Figure 2.3 Norwegian military observer Frode Staurset in Abyei, 2011.

Photo: private

largest donors of financial resources. Since over 90 % of the military and police forces come from countries in the South, these countries consider that they should have a greater influence on the content of the mandates in the Security Council. They also consider that the reimbursement rates for the expenses of participating in such operations should be raised. A number of key countries in the North are unwilling to support these demands since many of them are implementing austerity measures at home and since they consider that some emerging powers in the South should take on a greater share of the cost by increasing their financial contributions to UN peace operations.

Norway is seeking to improve the climate of cooperation between North and South, and to promote agreement on the form and content of operations and ensure that they have the necessary resources to accomplish the tasks mandated imposed by the Security Council. We will therefore continue to discuss the political and operational challenges with key countries in the North and South. In this process it will be important to motivate countries in the North to increase their contribution of uniformed personnel, since broad

participation will strengthen the legitimacy of such operations.

The operational challenges of peacekeeping operations are caused by a lack of correspondence between the tasks the peace mission is expected to perform and the resources made available to it. It has proved extremely difficult to obtain the necessary personnel and equipment.

One of the conditions for success in this area is that the host country is willing to cooperate. Delays in issuing visas, refusal to admit personnel from certain countries and limitations on movements make cooperation difficult.

Today's conflicts are often marked by an extremely difficult security situation, weak state structures, the involvement of many different actors and, not least, gross human rights violations. Norway supports the strong emphasis in UN peace operations on protecting civilians. This includes protection against conflict-related sexualised violence and measures for security sector reform in the host country. The latter is crucial if the host country is to be able to protect its civilian population. Norway therefore considers it important that in addition to robust military forces, operations should include police personnel and civilian experts, early warning systems and consultations with the local community. It is also important that they contribute to a well-managed political peace process.

Norway will play a proactive role in recruiting women to peace operations. About 30 % of the police and justice sector personnel in our standby rosters are women, and our goal is to increase this percentage. We are also seeking to ensure that both military and police personnel receive training that emphasises the importance of a gender perspective in the planning and implementation of all operations.

Today there is an increasing tendency for the UN to mandate regional organisations to conduct peace operations, in line with Chapter VIII of the UN Charter on cooperation with regional organisations. Not all regional organisations have the same operational capacity as the UN, and some have received UN support for capacity-building and logistics in the field. For example, the Organisation has provided both financial and material support for the African Union's operation in Somalia, and is building capacity and providing technical advice on the development of the Union's approach to security sector reform. It is in Norway's interest that the UN continues to develop its cooperation with the regional organi-

Box 2.6 Norwegian contributions to UN peace operations

Military contributions: since 2005 Norway has contributed to a number of UN-led operations. We supplied four motor torpedo boats for the operation in Lebanon in 2006/07, and together with Sweden we made available an engineer unit for the UN operation in Darfur in 2008, although this was rejected by the Sudanese Government. In 2009/10 we provided a well-drilling team and a field hospital in Chad. At the same time we increased our police participation in UN operations in Africa.

Our current military contributions are limited to around 30 staff officers and military observers in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kosovo, the Middle East and South Sudan. As our military participation in Afghanistan is being phased out, we will be able to provide greater military contributions to UN-led operations in a longer-term perspective. We are in the process of considering what kind of capacity we can make available. The contributions are most likely to comprise health personnel and engineers, both of whom will probably continue to be attractive since they are essential to the func-

tioning of any operation. In spring 2012 Norway took the initiative to fulfil a long-held Nordic ambition to provide a joint military contribution to a UN-led operation. Cooperation with other countries is also a possibility, and our experience of cooperation with Serbia in Chad was positive.

Police contributions: Norway has relatively large contingents of police personnel in Haiti, Liberia and South Sudan. In Haiti we have provided a team of specialists to investigate sexual abuse. In Liberia we have financed the building of centres for women and child victims of abuse at a number of police stations, and Norwegian police have advised on measures to combat sexualised violence. Through the cooperation programme Training for Peace, Norwegian police personnel are also building capacity among African police to equip them for peace operations. Norwegian police personnel have long experience as instructors and leaders, qualities that are becoming increasingly necessary for UN-led operations.

sations. The key issue is that the Organisation should retain its overriding role as a body for legitimising the use of force and implementing peace operations, whether the goal is peacekeeping or peace enforcement.

The Government will

- seek to strengthen UN conflict prevention efforts,
- strengthen the bilateral dialogue with the UN on mediation and facilitation of peace and reconciliation,
- provide political and financial support for envoys and mediators in conflict areas,
- work to improve cooperation between the UN and other key actors involved in prevention and mediation in conflict areas,
- take joint responsibility for international operations under the UN, NATO and the EU. Norwegian participation will be based on the UN Charter and have a clear UN mandate.
- seek to strengthen UN peace operations,
- give priority to participation in UN peacekeeping operations,

- make it a goal to increase our contribution to UN-led operations,
- develop guidelines and standards for efforts in the field,
- provide support to personnel participating in peace operations,
- promote the further development of UN cooperation with regional organisations on peace operations, for example through Training for Peace,
- give priority to the Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security.

2.4 Peacebuilding and fragile states

Fragile states, with their weak government institutions, are more likely than other states to experience armed conflict. About 1.5 billion people live in conflict-affected countries in situations of fragility.

Many parts of the UN system are involved in strengthening conflict management at the national and local level, laying a foundation for long-term peace and development through political processes, safeguarding human rights, pro-



Figure 2.4 Elections are an important part of peacebuilding. Presidential elections in East Timor, 2012.

Photo: UN Photo/Bernardino Soares

moting reconciliation, economic development and the rule of law, and strengthening the health and education sectors. Usually the World Bank, individual countries, private contractors and large numbers of NGOs are also involved.

2.4.1 The difficulties of peacebuilding

Peacebuilding depends primarily on internal political processes that are determined by political, economic and social factors, but the international community can still make a significant contribution. However, the international community's approach has too often been uncoordinated, unplanned and short-term, and this, combined with the fact that fragile states often have limited capacity for strategic planning, setting priorities and coordinating international support, makes the task even more difficult.

Norway has a strong bilateral and multilateral engagement in many of the states characterised as failed, for example Afghanistan, Haiti, Kenya, Pakistan, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan. Our engagement in states in situations of fragility and conflict is an important element of our efforts to promote human rights, development, humanitar-

ian solutions, and peace and reconciliation. Fragile states are also a potential security threat because they lack the capacity to deal with threats that undermine their own and other states' security, such as organised crime and terrorism. It is in Norway's interest that problems in a distant country do not become global. The piracy off Somalia, with the threat it poses to Norwegian shipping, is an example of a situation where Norway has an obvious and direct interest in the stability and development of another country. In the case of fragile states, the UN has an advantage because of the breadth of the tools at its disposal, and we are therefore a strong supporter of UN efforts to assist these countries.

A well-functioning justice sector provides a sound framework that is essential to the reconstruction and development of a state. Here too, Norway should take a coherent approach and support the development of the justice sector. There is growing awareness of the importance of coordinated efforts in this area.

In 2010, 10 countries in a situation of fragility established a network called the g7+. The group originally consisted of Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Nepal, the Central



Figure 2.5 A public meeting in Sudan.

Photo: UN Photo/Fred Noy.

African Republic, Chad, Sierra Leone, the Solomon Islands, South Sudan and East Timor. The aim is to exchange experience and work for a new paradigm for international engagement in countries in situations of conflict and fragility. The initiative is a good example of how these countries themselves are playing a leading role in resolving conflicts and reducing fragility, an approach that Norway supports. The group has now been expanded to include 19 countries.

In 2011, the g7+ launched the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, a new model of cooperation between these countries and their international partners that has received widespread support. Under the New Deal the countries have committed themselves to a set of goals that includes fostering inclusive political settlements, increasing people's access to justice, generating employment and providing accountable and fair service delivery. A total of 35 countries and six organisations have endorsed the New Deal, including Norway, the UN and the World Bank.

The multilateral institutions have an essential role to play in reducing the fragmentation of international assistance to fragile states. All the UN

member states, including Norway, need to ensure that what they have defined as the UN's task in peacebuilding is matched by the necessary resources and other framework conditions in other intergovernmental bodies.

The risks of involvement in fragile states are high. Many donor countries feel that peacebuilding efforts are compromised by corruption and waste. However, since the consequences of non-involvement may be even more serious, it is important to implement control and anti-corruption measures. Because of the high risks, responsibility for involvement in fragile states is often left to the UN. This poses a dilemma: the increasing focus on results in international assistance can lead to a reluctance to risk action that may be vital for development in the country concerned. Norway intends to demand results, while at the same time being willing to take risks.

2.4.2 The UN peacebuilding architecture

The UN has experienced major difficulties in coordinating both its own and other donors' efforts in individual countries. In 2005 two bodies were established to strengthen the capacity of the

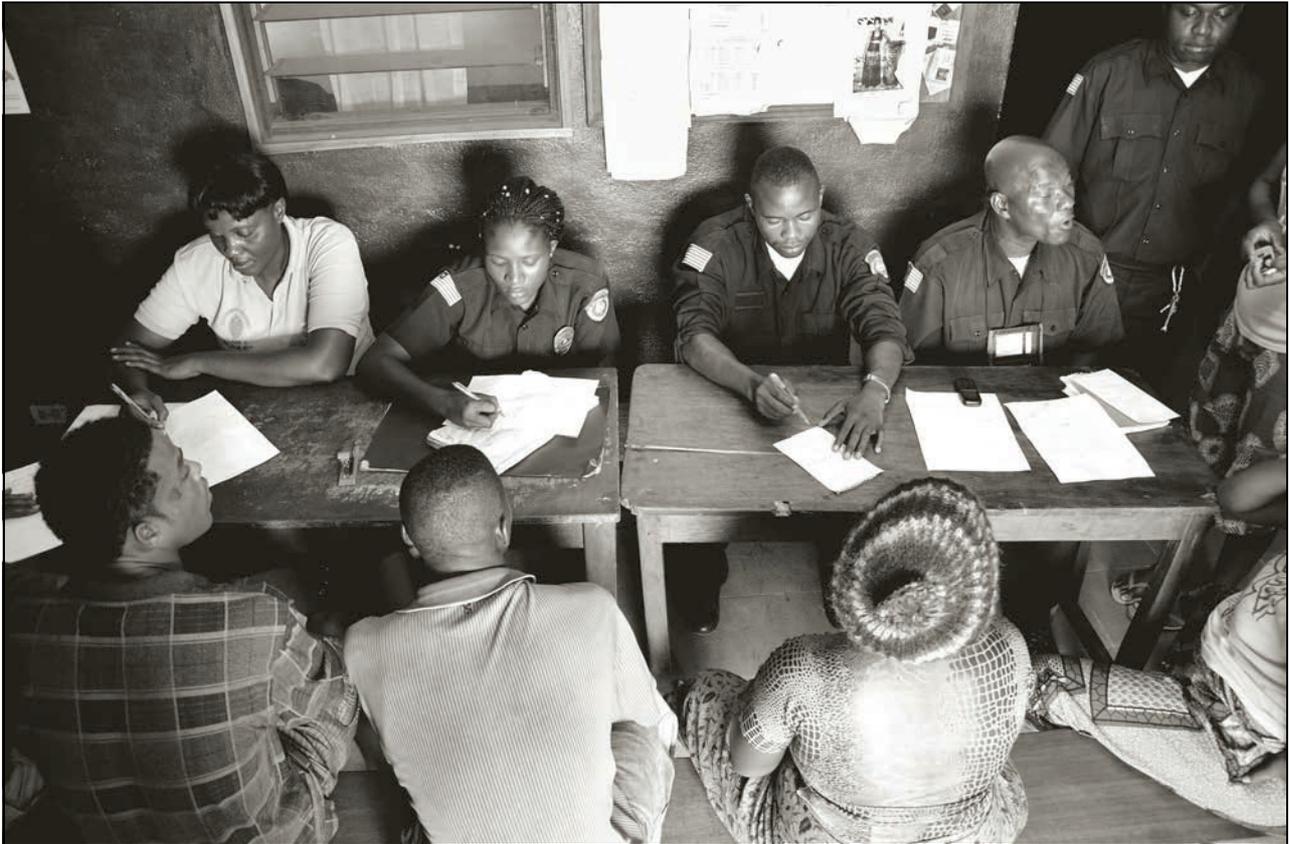


Figure 2.6 Police in Liberia undergoing training provided by the UN.

Photo: Thorodd Ommundsen

UN system for strategic long-term planning: the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund. In addition, the Peacebuilding Support Office was set up to act as secretariat to the Peacebuilding Commission, administer the Peacebuilding Fund and support the Secretary-General's efforts to coordinate the UN System in its peacebuilding efforts. This group of bodies will be referred to below as the UN peacebuilding architecture.

Norway believes the Peacebuilding Commission has taken too little account of context at country level and maintained too little contact with the Security Council, other UN executive organs and the international financial institutions. At the same time we consider it positive that the Commission has helped to maintain a focus on countries that otherwise receive little attention, while the Fund has provided financing and political support in critical phases, strengthened coordination and fostered a coherent approach. We will seek to ensure that the UN peacebuilding architecture is further strengthened through better coordination, clearer priorities and more targeted efforts in the field.

Norway is working with other donors to ensure that while focusing on results, the Peace-

building Fund is also willing to accept a degree of risk. A stronger Peacebuilding Commission, with close links to the Security Council, will hopefully provide the necessary umbrella for unifying UN engagement in peacebuilding.

Norway believes that in order to provide more effective support at country level, the member states must enable the UN to make more effective use of its tools for peacebuilding purposes. At present effective cooperation is being blocked by budget procedures, administrative procedures and limited mandates. We will support the Secretary-General in his efforts to take the necessary steps towards structural changes, and will mobilise support from other countries.

In Norway's view the UN neither can nor should be responsible for all actions taken in fragile states. The Organisation needs to concentrate on the tasks at which it is best in each country. These will often include overall strategic functions, support for reform and capacity-building in public institutions, and coordinating international assistance. Working with the local population at grass roots level and implementing local projects is better left to the more qualified NGOs.



Figure 2.7 South Sudan.

2.4.3 The right person in the right place at the right time

The UN is expected to carry out more and more peacekeeping and peacebuilding tasks. In recent years it has become clear that the UN system cannot possess either the competence or the capacity to cover all peacebuilding needs, and that it would benefit from involvement of other actors as a supplement. The challenges the UN is facing in this regard were discussed in a report by an advisory group appointed by the Secretary-General, the *Guéhenno Report (2011)*.¹ In autumn 2011, the Secretary-General produced the *UN Review of Civilian Capacities*, which details the capacities available for meeting the enormous need for personnel for international operations, building competence in the South, identifying and drawing on existing local capacity in fragile states and, not least, ensuring that expertise remains in the country after the peacebuilding team have left. The review also examines administrative procedures and bottlenecks that need to be addressed. Nor-

way is providing political and financial support for the Secretary-General's work in this area.

We have long advocated the use of civilian capacities in peacebuilding, for example in the form of the Norwegian standby rosters NORCAP, NORDEM and the Crisis Response Pool (see Box 2.7). Several member states have shown an interest in our experience, and we are conducting a dialogue with a number of countries that wish to establish corresponding mechanisms. Norway and like-minded countries are supporting the efforts of the Secretary-General, but these are being hampered by the poor cooperation climate between other groups of member states. Norway considers the use of civilian capacities to be an important means of making UN efforts on the ground more effective, and will support the implementation of the recommendations in the Review of Civilian Capacities through our own policies and by mobilising support from other countries.

The Government will

- strengthen the capacity of the multilateral institutions to assist national authorities in their peacebuilding and development efforts,

¹ Civilian Capacity in the Aftermath of Conflict: Independent Report of the Senior Advisory Group.

- work for greater coordination of UN efforts in fragile states, and ensure that the Organisation works closely with other donors,
- be a stable donor and significant contributor to the UN Peacekeeping Fund,
- promote the use of external civilian capacity in peace operations and peacebuilding, for example through the standby rosters NORDEM and NORCAP,
- strengthen cooperation between the UN system and the World Bank in fragile states.

2.5 Disarmament and non-proliferation

The multilateral nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation system has come under heavy pressure in recent years. In addition to the lack of progress on disarmament by the nuclear powers, there is a risk of proliferation by a several countries, primarily Iran and North Korea.

2.5.1 Non-proliferation, no progress – deadlocked negotiations

The Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 2010 resulted in agreement on seeking the “peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons” and a detailed action plan for implementing the commitments related to nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. However, little progress has been made towards these goals. Although nuclear weapons stockpiles have been considerably reduced since the end of the Cold War, there are no signs of any committed movement towards a world without nuclear weapons. On the contrary, a number of countries have indicated that they still consider their nuclear weapons to be of great importance for national security, and have comprehensive plans for upgrading them.

The established multilateral disarmament machinery seems to have ground to a standstill. One of the reasons for this is the requirement of consensus. During the Cold War it was easier to make consensus a requirement in multilateral disarmament forums because in many cases only two superpowers had to be taken into account. In today’s geopolitical reality, this requirement is an obstacle to multilateral disarmament and makes it possible for a handful of countries to maintain the status quo. Norway would like to see a fundamental change in the approach to disarmament and

non-proliferation and greater attention being paid to the consequences of lack of progress.

In recent years the problems and challenges of work in multilateral forums have led countries that wish to obtain results to choose other processes and arenas, for example unilateral and bilateral solutions. The Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions were negotiated in separate processes, although the UN is also involved, since the General Assembly has approved the conventions and UN organisations are involved in their implementation.

2.5.2 Reform of the intergovernmental machinery

Norway would like to see a strong UN in the area of disarmament. We are working for the revitalisation of the First Committee of the General Assembly, which deals with disarmament, on the basis of the existing bodies. The current proposals include shorter sessions, the adoption of fewer and more operative resolutions and other measures to enhance the Committee’s role as a forum for dialogue and the exchange of views. In the Conference on Disarmament (CD), Norway has proposed that the consensus requirement should be dropped and that the CD should be open to all UN member states that wish to participate and to civil society. With regard to the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC), Norway has been actively working for shorter sessions and a more concise agenda, and has proposed dropping the requirement of consensus on the outcome document. However, none of these proposals have been adopted.

The poor prospects for reform of the existing disarmament machinery make it necessary to consider other alternatives. One possibility would be to establish disarmament negotiations under a mandate from the General Assembly and with the Assembly’s rules of procedure, which do not include a consensus requirement. Norway is considering putting forward such a proposal together with like-minded countries if it is likely to receive constructive support in the General Assembly.

There are also other possibilities less closely linked with the UN system. Norway considers that the primary concern must be that the chosen approach should yield practical results. As long as the existing multilateral disarmament machinery is dysfunctional, we will continue to work together with like-minded countries, the UN, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and civil society on

Box 2.7 Norwegian civilian contributions to peace operations and peacebuilding

Since the 1990s Norway has played an important role in the efforts to build capacity at national and international level. Today we contribute a large number of civilian experts to international crisis management, and our standby rosters can call on broad expertise and many nationalities, including personnel from countries in the South, who can be deployed at short notice.

Since 1991, *NORCAP has been administered* by the Norwegian Refugee Council. NORCAP is the world's most frequently used standby roster, and at any one time around 160 individuals are deployed in various parts of the world. The Council also administers personnel from other countries seconded to standby rosters, such as the UN ProCap (protection capacity), GenCap (gender capacity) and MSU (Mediation Support Unit).

NORDEM (Norwegian Resource Bank for Democracy and Human Rights) was established in 1993 by the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights, and deploys some 80 personnel a year.

Since 1989 the Ministry of Justice and Public Security has deployed civilian police personnel through the Police Directorate to operations under the UN, the EU and the OSCE, and to bilateral projects. As of January 2012, 54 personnel have been deployed.

The Crisis Response Pool, under the auspices of the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, was established in 2003 and consists of personnel from the prosecuting authority, the courts and the correctional services, together with a number of defence lawyers. As of January 2012, 14 persons have been deployed.

Since the 1990s, the Directorate for Civil Protection and Emergency Planning has administered two operative units (the Norwegian Support Team and Norwegian UNDAC Support), consisting mainly of personnel from the Norwegian Civil Defence, to provide support to aid agency personnel working in international disaster areas.

finding alternative approaches in the area of disarmament, as we did in the case of the Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

In Norway's view, NATO's work in this field should reflect global political trends, and Norway has played a leading role in putting disarmament on NATO's agenda. The goal of a world without nuclear weapons is now part of the Alliance's new 2010 Strategic Concept. The Alliance concluded its Defence and Deterrence Posture Review at the NATO Summit in Chicago in 2012, at which negative security assurances were mentioned for the first time in a NATO context. Agreement was also reached on promoting transparency and confidence-building in relations with Russia on short-range nuclear weapons, a category of nuclear weapons that so far is not covered by any disarmament agreement.

In the disarmament field generally, Norway will continue to focus particularly on humanitarian aspects. We will work together with other member states and organisations to promote the development of norms and instruments to regulate and /or prohibit the use of weapons and types of weapons with unacceptable humanitarian consequences.

Norway will host an international conference in March 2013 on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons detonations, both deliberate and accidental, and the question of a credible, effective emergency response. The conference is designed to engage a broader set of actors than have been involved in disarmament issues in recent years, and will involve the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Red Cross and other humanitarian organisations. One of the aims of the conference is to raise awareness that the consequences of the use of nuclear weapons for the climate and for health and food production will be global, and will hit the poorest countries especially hard. This initiative has already attracted a great deal of attention.

The Government will

- continue to work for a comprehensive reform of the UN's disarmament bodies, including a weakening of the requirement of consensus in multilateral negotiation processes in this policy area,
- seek to ensure that civil society and other interested parties are able to participate in international disarmament processes,

Box 2.8 Ban on cluster munitions

Following the failure of the states parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) to agree on starting an international process to address the humanitarian problems caused by cluster munitions, the Norwegian Government invited the UN, the Red Cross movement and other humanitarian organisations to an international conference in Oslo in 2006. Norway thereby took a leading role in the process that resulted in the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which bans the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of these weapons. The process had also been driven forward by humanitarian and human rights organisations, which had worked for many years to put the issue on the agenda. The Secretary-General and a number of UN field-based organisations took an active part in the process, which rapidly gained the support of a large number of states the world over. The ban includes all types of cluster munitions, and is generally agreed to

have set a new standard in international humanitarian law. The convention was opened for signature in Oslo in December 2008, entered into force in August 2010 and has so far been ratified by 111 countries. It also has the full support of the international community in the form of the UN, humanitarian and human rights organisations, and the International Red Cross movement. In the course of the first two years since the convention entered into force, large numbers of cluster munitions have been destroyed, large areas of land are being cleared by the states parties and the norm that cluster munitions are an unacceptable weapon has been strengthened, even among states that are not parties to the convention. This shows that it is possible to achieve good, concrete results in disarmament issues when different actors cooperate on achieving a common goal and keep the focus on humanitarian realities in the field.

- strengthen the legal obligations relating to international instruments and draw particular attention in disarmament contexts to the humanitarian and development consequences of the use of nuclear weapons,
- work for a world without nuclear weapons,
- put the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons use on the international agenda.

2.6 UN efforts to address emerging threats

Terrorism and transnational organised crime are serious threats to international peace and security. The fight against terrorism is high on the international agenda, especially since the 2001 attacks on New York and Washington. However, the threat posed by transnational organised crime has only recently attracted international attention. Both these threats directly affect Norwegian interests.

2.6.1 Combating international terrorism

Counter-terrorism is on the agenda of both the General Assembly and the Security Council. Subsidiary bodies have been established in both forums to address the problem, and practical action against terrorism is on the agenda of many

UN specialised agencies. A series of instruments for combating terrorism that are binding under international law have been adopted. They cover a broad field, including suppression of terrorism financing and bombing, access to nuclear material, and prevention of hijacking.

Norway's efforts against terrorism are based on respect for human rights and the rule of law. The relevant international instruments are an important part of the long-term work in this field, and are used as a tool to prevent and combat terrorism. The UN has a special responsibility for coordinating the global efforts against terrorism, and Norway believes that the UN's role should be strengthened in order to ensure that international efforts are collectively and individually followed up by all the countries of the world. In our view a coherent, long-term approach, with a focus on prevention, is the most effective means of combating international terrorism. Strengthening the role of the UN would unite and coordinate international efforts in the short and long term.

The UN's Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy represents a major step in the international efforts to combat terrorism, and is at the core of Norway's engagement in the UN. The strategy reduces international tensions in counter-terrorism efforts because it takes a broad approach and because it has been adopted by consensus in the

Box 2.9 Transnational organised crime in the fishing industry

The Norwegian National Advisory Group against Organised IUU Fishing was established in 2009 specifically to combat organised crime related to IUU fishing (as discussed in the white paper on the fight against organised crime (Meld. St. 7 (2010–2011)). It has proved difficult to mobilise global cooperation on action in this area due to the fact that there is little international awareness that fisheries crime may also be perpetrated by transnational organised criminal groups.

Acting on a Norwegian initiative and with Norwegian financial support, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) performed a study of transnational organised crime in the fishing industry that was published in April 2011. The Norwegian National Advisory Group against Organized IUU Fishing was consulted, and made a valuable contribution. The

study identified a range of crimes involving the global fishing industry, such as the use of fishing vessels for drug and weapons smuggling and the trafficking of persons for the purpose of forced labour on illegal fishing vessels. It also showed the global, transnational nature of crimes in the fishing industry. As a result of the study, the UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice adopted a resolution on combating the problem of transnational organised crime committed at sea at its 20th session in 2011. An increasing number of international and regional bodies such as Interpol, ASEAN and the OECD are now becoming concerned about the issue, and in November 2011 the European Parliament gave its full support to the study recommendations in the form of a resolution on combating illegal fishing at the global level.

General Assembly. Norway supports the strategy both politically and financially, for example through our support for the efforts of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force to assist member states to implement the strategy. We will continue to support the efforts to strengthen UN counter-terrorism activities.

2.6.2 Transnational organised crime

Transnational organised crime, which involves drugs, trafficking in weapons, piracy, human trafficking and environmental crime, is a growing problem. It directly affects security and in many countries threatens to undermine stability and development. Criminals are buying immunity from the authorities and using ruthless methods to corner the market and secure market power. The profits of drug smuggling and other transnational organised crime have been estimated by the UN to be worth USD 870 billion in 2009. This is about twice the size of Norway's GDP. Less than 1 % of this is seized. Digital crime is perhaps the most widespread form of transnational crime and requires a correspondingly global response.

Transnational organised crime directly affects Norway, and has substantial consequences for countries where we are working for security and development. Piracy off the coast of Somalia is an example, and Norway has funded two experts

from the Correctional Services to advise on execution of pirates' sentences.

Norwegian companies are dependent on the existence of a functioning police force and an independent judicial system in the host country to provide the predictability they need in order to operate abroad. The existence of criminal organisations with a global field of operation also means that the Norwegian police authorities have to depend on global cooperation between the different countries' police and judicial authorities.

The UN conventions against transnational organized crime, the three protocols on human trafficking, human smuggling and firearms, and the two UN Conventions against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and against Corruption, form the framework for intergovernmental work in the UN in the field of organised crime.

Norway believes that the development of an international legal order, effective cross-border and cross-regional cooperation, strong justice and security institutions, and intensive anti-corruption efforts play an important role in the fight against transnational organised crime. Regional and national ownership are essential to success. So far the justice and security institutions involved in crime prevention have mainly focused on national conditions, and cooperation between countries and regions has been limited. The efforts need to be linked far more closely with the international agenda for development, security and the rule of

Box 2.10 Combating piracy off Somalia

The financial flows generated by piracy are destabilising Somalia even further. The Security Council established the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) to coordinate the international efforts to suppress piracy in these waters. The responsibility for coordination does not lie with the UN but with the CGPCS, although the latter reports on progress to the Security Council. The CGPCS is a coalition of volunteers, and has no secretariat and no employees. Norway chaired the group in the first half of 2010. The UN also manages the Trust Fund that provides financial support to the CGPCS, which was established during Norway's chairmanship. There have been a number of debates in the Security Council on the issue of Somali piracy, particularly the question of prosecuting arrested pirates. The board of the Trust Fund is chaired by the Department of Political Affairs and the fund is managed by UNODC. However, it has been decided that UNODC will no longer have this role because it is also the largest recipient of project support from the fund, primarily for projects in the justice sector in the region dealing with prosecution of pirates.

law, and UN organisations need to cooperate more closely with international police organisations. Important steps would be to strengthen national Interpol offices in conflict areas and to ensure the effectiveness of global efforts to combat money laundering.

Criminal law and the fight against crime have been on the UN agenda for a long time. Transnational organised crime is one of the greatest global challenges the world is facing, and has to be combated at the global level. In Norway's view the UN's normative and operational tools place it in a unique position to raise transnational crime prevention to the global level and drive cooperation mechanisms and common approaches. A recent step in the right direction was the inclusion of this form of crime as a separate item on the Secretary-General's new five-year action agenda. Norway wishes to see the development of a global strategy against transnational organised crime and better coordination of UN efforts in this area, and will support the Secretary-General on this.

The Government will

- support the implementation of the UN's Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy,
- defend human rights and the principles of the rule of law in the fight against terrorism,
- support UN efforts to combat transnational organised crime, including the work of UNODC,
- support the development of a global strategy against transnational organised crime, including the development of national and regional strategies,
- seek to ensure that the work against illicit capital flows generated by organised crime is given higher priority by the UN,
- give priority in its work in the UN to the fight against corruption, illicit traffic in drugs, and transnational organised crime, including human trafficking.

3 The international legal order, human rights and gender equality

Co-existence between states is rooted in important principles laid down in the UN Charter such as state sovereignty and the prohibition on the use of force against another state. Both major powers and small states have found that predictable international cooperation governed by the rule of law is in their interests. Owing to our geographical location and particular resource-related and economic features, the maintenance and further development of the international legal order and multilateral governance systems is one of Norway's primary foreign policy interests. The multilateral agreements, rules and regulatory frameworks of international law are essential if we are to meet our society's needs and achieve its goals.

Countries that respect fundamental human rights are crucial to the development of a stable international legal order. The human rights standards to which all the UN's member states are committed are necessary for holding states accountable, and the UN is the most important platform for safeguarding and developing human rights. This includes the principle that women have equal worth and equal rights, which follows from the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the Organisation has made a significant contribution to the promotion of women's rights and gender equality. However, established rights and values may be challenged by a shift in the international balance of power. The current international legal order cannot be taken for granted – it needs to be continually upheld and further developed.

3.1 The international legal order

The international community is guided by an international legal order that provides a clear and predictable framework for the conduct of states in the international arena and that is developed through an increasingly bilaterally and multilaterally binding cooperation. The world is becoming more closely interwoven, and an international system of rules needs to be developed to regulate the growing contact across national borders and to

address fresh global challenges. No other actor can compete with the UN as a global arena for developing the international legal order and the norms governing relations between states.

3.1.1 The normative role of the UN

The UN plays a key normative role in the international community, and many parts of the UN system have important functions in this work.

One of the main tasks of the UN General Assembly is to encourage the progressive development of international law and its codification, and in 1948 the International Law Commission



Figure 3.1 A judgment by the International Court of Justice in The Hague.

Photo: ICJ/Jeroen Bouman

was established for this purpose. The Commission prepares some draft conventions for adoption by the General Assembly, while others are first negotiated in separate intergovernmental working groups before being adopted by the Assembly.

The Security Council also has a strong normative function. This is particularly evident in the case of the Council's resolutions imposing sanctions against states, entities or individuals that threaten international peace and security, which are binding on all member states.

Non-binding rules are also adopted in all UN spheres of activity in the form of resolutions, declarations and other decisions. Despite the fact that they are not binding, these texts have considerable political influence, especially if they have been adopted by consensus. Such documents, for example the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, may under certain circumstances also constitute binding customary law.

The International Court of Justice in The Hague is the foremost body for the peaceful resolution of disputes between states, but it also has another important role. Through its interpretation and application of conventions and state practice, the Court plays a part in clarifying and developing international law. For example, it has made a significant contribution to clarifying the rules of international law relating to maritime delimitation. The Court's thorough evaluations and use of legal method were useful guidelines for Norway and Russia in their negotiations on maritime delimitation in the Barents Sea and the Arctic Ocean.

The Secretary-General has a particular responsibility for instruments of international law, in two ways. The first is by serving as a depository for multilateral treaties. The depository must accept all notifications and documents related to the treaty, examine whether all formal requirements are met, deposit them, register the treaty, and notify all relevant acts to the parties concerned. Secondly, all agreements that are binding under international law, not merely treaties but also agreements entered into by member states, must be registered with the Secretary-General.

3.1.2 Compliance with international law

In order for the goals and results of international legal instruments to be achieved, these must be implemented in national legislation and respected by the individual state. It is the states themselves that are responsible for complying with their commitments under international law. However, the UN has a number of tools at its disposal to assist

Box 3.1 The Fisheries Case

Before the regime of the exclusive economic zone was introduced under the Convention on the Law of the Sea in 1982, a state could claim exclusive fishing rights in its territorial waters, while the high seas were open to fishing by all countries. During the 1930s a dispute arose between Norway and the UK on the delimitation of Norwegian territorial waters and thus the area to which Norway had exclusive fishing rights. The UK claimed that the method used by Norway to determine the baselines for delimiting its territorial waters was in violation of international law, and referred the dispute to the International Court of Justice in The Hague in 1948. On 18 December 1951, the Court ruled that the Norwegian baselines were not contrary to international law. The method of drawing straight baselines has since become part of state practice and is now regulated by the Convention on the Law of the Sea.

states, not only in complying with their obligations, but also in safeguarding their rights under international law. The Secretary-General provides information on the rules of international law and assists states in building competence on legal matters in this field.

There are a number of mechanisms in the UN system for monitoring states' compliance with their obligations under international law. These consist for example of dealing with reports and complaints submitted by states or individuals, and the establishment of commissions of inquiry or teams of observers by bodies such as the Human Rights Council, the General Assembly and the Security Council.

The UN also has tools for the peaceful settlement of disputes. The most important of these is the International Court of Justice at The Hague, which gives advisory opinions on legal questions and delivers binding judgments on specific disputes between states. Accepting the Court's authority to decide a dispute is voluntary, and a state may do so on a general basis, in the case of disputes on particular legal questions, or on a case-by-case basis. The Court's high level of activity indicates its considerable relevance, and it enjoys a high degree of legitimacy by virtue of its position as the principal judicial organ of the United Nations. Norway considers that this role

Box 3.2 The UN and international environmental law

Legally binding multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) are a key instrument in the efforts to address the problem of climate change and other global environmental problems. A number of global MEAs have been concluded under the auspices of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), and intergovernmental negotiations on new binding agreements are conducted under its leadership. Conventions have been negotiated on key environmental areas including the Climate Change Convention and the Kyoto Protocol, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (genetically modified organisms) and the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources etc., the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

Currently negotiations are being conducted on a new global agreement to reduce the use and release of mercury, which is one of the most hazardous substances, both to the environment and to human health.

Norway's policy is to be at the forefront of efforts to develop new and stricter environmental agreements, and has played a leading role in initiating negotiations on several MEAs. Although

the existing conventions together cover a wide field, the obligations they entail only target a fraction of the massive environmental problems that need to be addressed. Many of the environmental problem areas covered by existing MEAs are closely linked. For example deforestation and forest degradation are linked with climate change, since they are responsible for one-sixth of annual global greenhouse gas emissions. Deforestation also reduces the capacity of terrestrial ecosystems to temporarily store surface water, which can lead to soil erosion and desertification. This in turn affects the biodiversity of these ecosystems, thereby undermining the livelihoods of local communities. Achieving the goals of the Climate Change Convention, the Convention to Combat Desertification and the Convention on Biological Diversity requires sustainable forest management. It is therefore important to view the MEAs in relation to one another, and the synergies between them should be utilised and further developed. For example, in the area of hazardous chemicals, Norway has played a leading role in the efforts to coordinate the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions through the establishment of a joint secretariat and conferences of the parties. Ensuring compliance with existing obligations under these conventions is a challenge, and more work is needed to establish more effective mechanisms for this purpose.

needs to be further strengthened and that more countries should give the Court general authority to decide disputes under international law.

It is in Norway's interest that rules are complied with, that states have the will and capacity to stand by their commitments under international law, that their actions are credible and predictable, and that disputes are settled peacefully. The UN's role in monitoring and dispute settlement, and the assistance and guidance it provides to member states on the content of international law, directly serve Norway's interests.

3.1.3 The UN and the Law of the Sea

One of the most important international instruments in line with fundamental Norwegian interests is the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

There are 162 parties to the convention, which means that it enjoys almost universal support. It has been called "a constitution for the oceans", and establishes rules for all maritime activity. In 1995 it was supplemented by the United Nations Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (Fish Stocks Agreement), which elaborates on and strengthens important provisions of the convention. Norway ratified both instruments in 1996.

The Law of the Sea Convention and the Fish Stocks Agreement are reviewed annually by the General Assembly. This is the only global forum for the general review of sea-related issues and is

thus a key arena for promoting Norway's interests, values and views in this area.

The 2009 Binding International Agreement on Port State Control Measures to Combat, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing (Port State Agreement) is an example of how the Law of the Sea regime is implemented and of how Norwegian interests are promoted in several different forums. In the last few years we have intensified our efforts to combat IUU fishing both in our own region and at the global level, and control measures for landings of fish are crucial in this respect. However, implementing control measures in Norway has little effect as long as illegally caught fish are being landed elsewhere. Measures at the global level were needed, and in 2006 Norway succeeded in getting the Review Conference on the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement to recommend that a binding international agreement on port state control should be negotiated. The General Assembly followed up the Norwegian proposal, and in autumn 2006 recommended that the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) should open negotiations. The negotiations were terminated in 2009, and Norway ratified the agreement in 2011.

An issue currently being debated in the UN concerns the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction and whether a new agreement is needed to regulate this. A large number of countries have long demanded a new agreement to supplement the Law of the Sea Convention, and some have pointed out the need for an agreement to cover marine genetic resources as well. Others would like to see an agreement establishing Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). At the Rio conference in June 2012, Norway supported a declaration stating that by the end of its 69th session, the General Assembly should decide on the development of such an agreement. The provisions of the agreement will have to be negotiated afterwards. The issue has implications for a wide range of Norwegian interests, and we will give it high priority. We will seek to ensure that our interests are safeguarded and that the agreement is integrated into the Law of the Sea regime, with a firm basis in the General Assembly.

The question of regulating the use of bottom fishing gear in order to prevent damage to benthic habitats such as coral reefs has been addressed by the General Assembly together with FAO, regional organisations and fishing nations. Decisions in the General Assembly have been incorporated in an unusually direct way into national leg-

islation and the rules of the regional fisheries management organisations. Norway has laid down rules for the protection of its extensive cold-water coral reefs and has played an active part in the implementation of such rules in the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission and the Joint Norwegian–Russian Fisheries Commission. However, an evaluation commissioned by the UN of developments in this field revealed that compliance with the rules varies from one sea area to another.

In spite of inherent conflicts of views between North and South and between various country groupings in different UN forums, law of the sea work under UN auspices has been productive, and a focus has been maintained on areas of common interest. However, in the last few years existing conflicts of a more structural nature have become more pronounced, and have increasingly often impeded the development of new initiatives. In the time to come, Norway will therefore focus on seeking to prevent disagreements in certain areas from standing in the way of developments in areas where all states are likely to have common interests. This requires close contact and dialogue with all the various groups.

The Government will

- seek to strengthen the implementation of international law by various means, including monitoring, dispute settlement, capacity-building and, where appropriate, new agreements.

3.2 Human rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 states that all human beings are born equal, and is based on the principle of equal rights and non-discrimination. The UN is Norway's most important platform in the work for human rights.

3.2.1 Pressure on human rights

International human rights work also has a political dimension, and has given rise to considerable discord among UN member states, between those that promote human rights and those that are attempting to avoid criticism. Another division is between Western countries, which have always focused mainly on civil and political rights, and most developing countries, which focus primarily on economic, social and cultural rights. A number of states are against the idea that the UN should

Box 3.3 Determining the outer limit of the continental shelf, and the Norwegian Continental Shelf Initiative

Under the provisions of the Convention on the Law of the Sea, the continental shelf of a coastal state extends automatically to a distance of 200 nautical miles from the baselines. However, a number of states, including Norway, have a continental shelf that according to specific criteria set out in the convention extends further out. Coastal states that wish to establish the outer limits of their continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles have to submit the necessary technical and scientific data to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, which makes recommendations that the state in question will use to establish the final limits, which are then binding. Norway submitted its data to the commission in 2006, and received its recommendations in 2009. The outer limits of our continental shelf will be determined in accordance with the recommendations.

Many developing countries have encountered considerable technical and financial prob-

lems when preparing their submission to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf. In 2008, Norway therefore launched the Norwegian Continental Shelf Initiative, which is a trust fund for facilitating the preparation of submissions to the Commission by developing states. The fund has so far provided assistance to 11 African coastal states, and currently most of the assistance is being concentrated on a large cooperation project in West Africa.

The Norwegian Continental Shelf Initiative has two aims. One is to ensure that African coastal states have access to natural resources in accordance with the Convention on the Law of the Sea. This will contribute substantially to economic and social progress in these countries. The other is to avoid the international Law of the Sea regime becoming undermined. This is not only in Norway's interests, but also in those of the whole international community.

address the human rights situation in individual countries, and regard the UN monitoring mechanisms with suspicion.

The greatest challenge in the field of human rights is the discrepancy between the obligations undertaken by states and their practical implementation. Human rights are being systematically violated and ignored in all regions of the world. Norway has therefore made it a priority to strengthen respect for human rights internally in countries where they are being violated.

Another international challenge is to reach agreement on how to interpret human rights. For example there is strong disagreement on whether or not the right to freedom of expression includes the right to criticise a religion or religious leaders. Women's sexual and reproductive health and rights is another example of a field under growing pressure from conservative forces. The requirement that human rights must be interpreted in a historical, cultural or religious context is in conflict with their status as universal standards. The requirement is not new, but its opponents are becoming stronger and more united. However, the situation is not completely negative, since the group of moderate non-European countries that wish to strengthen the UN's human rights work is

growing. The result is an increasing tendency towards cross-regional initiatives that overcome differences between geographical and political groups. Norway attaches importance to working in such cross-regional groups and will continue to do so.

Norway's goal for its UN work is to defend universal human rights, and to take specific initiatives to promote the development of norms and standards and to strengthen the position of human rights on the ground. We need to draw up a strategy to deal with countries that try to undermine these efforts, and in order to do so we must strengthen our relations with countries in all regions that share our views on the significance of human rights. We will only achieve results if the human rights issues that we promote internationally are in line with our bilateral cooperation at country level. The latter includes not only efforts to establish human rights dialogues, but also the day-to-day work at foreign service missions and other representatives of Norway abroad, and our support to civil society.

Norway will stand by its principles and at the same time be guided by pragmatic considerations. Improving human rights requires a long-term effort.

Box 3.4 Human rights conventions

Nine core conventions dealing specifically with human rights have been adopted, together with a number of attendant protocols, some of which contain a communications procedure.

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966)
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965)
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1984)
- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1990)
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)
- International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (2006)

Norway has ratified all except the last three of these conventions. We stated in our 2009 report to the Human Rights Council that work on ratifying and implementing the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment is among our national human rights priorities.

In May 2012 the Government submitted a proposition requesting the Storting to consent to the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. A new Guardianship Act has been passed that may not enter into force after the entry into force of the convention in Norway. The aim is that this Act should enter into force on 1 July 2013.

Ratification of the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance raises issues related to the possible need to amend legislation and/or practice, which are being examined.

Ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture requires setting up or designating one or several independent national preventive mechanisms to undertake regular visits to places of detention. Norway signed the protocol on 24 September 2003. In June 2011, the Government appointed an inter-ministerial working group to consider which body or bodies should serve as a national prevention mechanism and to examine the consequences of possible Norwegian ratification. Their report was submitted for public consultation in June 2012. The working group proposed that the Parliamentary Ombudsman for Public Administration should be designated as the national prevention mechanism and that the Act and instructions relating to the Parliamentary Ombudsman for Public Administration should be amended accordingly. Ratification of the protocol requires the Storting's consent.

The Government has not yet decided whether or not to become party to the optional protocols on communications procedures to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, respectively. In its considerations, the Government will review the relation of these instruments to Norwegian practice and the consequences of ratification. As regards the protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Government has commissioned an independent report on the possible consequences of Norwegian ratification, which has been submitted to public consultation and which will serve as a basis for the Government's decision.

In our human rights policy we will give priority to the following objectives.

Protecting freedom of expression and freedom of religion. A number of countries are attempting to achieve protection from religious

criticism by limiting free expression. We cannot allow the right to free expression to be weakened. Norway believes that freedom of religion combined with freedom of expression is the best means of safeguarding the individual's right to freely practise his religion.



Figure 3.2 Sadaf Nasim, a volunteer at the Rahnuma Family Planning Association, discusses the problems involved in introducing sexual education in Pakistan.

Photo: Norway UN/Sigrun Agøy Engum

Protection of human rights defenders. One of Norway's main priorities in international human rights work is protection of human rights defenders. In many countries these men and women work under extremely difficult conditions and in

the face of threats and persecution to safeguard other people's human rights. Norway has headed the negotiations on protection of human rights defenders in the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council for many years. We will

Box 3.5 Freedom of religion and freedom of expression

The question of freedom of religion versus freedom of expression is a major source of discord in UN debates on human rights. Since 1999, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has regularly proposed a resolution protecting religion and religious symbols and focusing more strongly on blasphemy and "defamation of religion" than on the individual's rights, including the right to be protected from abuse. The resolution has received a majority of votes in the General Assembly. At the same time, the EU has proposed a resolution focusing on the right to freedom of religion and belief.

In 2011 the OIC proposed a revised resolution placing the individual at the centre, a step Norway considers very encouraging. However, the possibility of converting to another religion,

which is an important element in the EU text, is not included in the OIC's text, which in our view is a weakness.

In order to ensure tolerance and freedom of religion, we must continue to work towards a resolution that contains all the important principles in the two existing texts and that safeguards religious freedom and combats intolerance.

The two resolution texts are a good illustration of the tug-of-war in the UN between countries with different approaches to human rights and a different emphasis on the importance of the individual versus that of the group. The negotiations clearly show that we must not cease our efforts to ensure that the content of the norms adopted by the UN is in line with our values.



Figure 3.3 President of the Sámediggi (the Sami Parliament), Egil Olli, and Ambassador Tine Mørch Smith from Norway's Mission to the United Nations at the opening of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 2011.

Photo: Norway UN

continue to promote resolutions affirming that the individual state is responsible for ensuring the right of human rights defenders to freedom of expression and of association, and seek to ensure that legislation in these areas is in accordance with international law. In 2011, in connection with the political upheavals in the Arab world, the member states succeeded in adopting a unanimous resolution strengthening the right to conduct peaceful protests. This is the first time the General Assembly has adopted a resolution in which the highly controversial political term “peaceful protest” is affirmed.

A global moratorium on the abolition of the death penalty. Norway will actively promote the imposition of a global moratorium as a step towards the total abolition of the death penalty, and continue to take a leading role in the cross-regional efforts to recruit more support for the UN resolution on a moratorium. We will seek to intensify the efforts to abolish the death penalty in the time leading up to the World Congress against the Death Penalty in Madrid in 2013, among other

things during our presidency of the Support Group for the International Commission against the Death Penalty.

The fight against racism. Norway is actively engaged in the work against racism and discrimination in the UN. Some countries are attempting to limit freedom of expression as a measure to combat racism. We are therefore strongly involved in the implementation of the 2001 World Conference against Racism in Durban. We also made active efforts to make sure that the outcome of the Durban Review Conference of 2009 was positive, and emphasised the importance of freedom of expression in this context. We are continually involved in the work against racism and discrimination in the UN while at the same time we seek to ensure that these goals are not achieved at the expense of the right to free expression.

Promoting children's rights. Norway attaches great importance to strengthening and further developing the normative basis for protecting children and promoting their rights. We advocated

the establishment of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Children and are providing both political and financial support for the mandate. We also actively support the efforts to protect children in conflict situations, which are headed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. The Special Representative attaches particular importance to combating impunity for abuse of these children. Through our development cooperation we are working to strengthen the implementation of children's rights in individual countries in order to improve their situation in practice. We are particularly involved in education and health, especially child mortality and maternal health.

3.2.2 UN efforts in the field of human rights

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) serves as advocate and voice for human rights at global and country level, and OHCHR's advisory and capacity-building functions in member states have given the UN human rights system an operative capability.

Norway will seek to strengthen OHCHR in view of its vital role in relation to the Human Rights Council and the importance we attach to the work for peace, security and development. The Office's special competence on human rights and its role as dedicated voice for human rights in general require support if we are to see positive developments in the human rights situation.

Integrating human rights into the work at country level is a considerable challenge for the UN. UN organisations are only present in a country at the country's invitation and are dependent on close cooperation with the authorities. In Norway's view there needs to be an open and respectful dialogue between UN country teams and local authorities if the teams are to work effectively and obtain results. The greater the country team's knowledge of the international human rights system and how its norms and recommendations can help the country in question, the easier it is to use human rights as a tool in the day-to-day work. Greater knowledge of this field will also put the team in a better position to take up human rights problems when the situation calls for it. It is also important in UN peace operations both to establish good relations with the authorities and to point out human rights violations when they occur. We will seek to ensure that the whole UN system becomes a stronger voice for human rights.

The Government will

- seek to maintain and strengthen the established UN norms and standards in the field of human rights,
- seek to ensure that OHCHR maintains its independence and that the office is given sufficient resources,
- work for the integration of the human rights perspective in the UN's development efforts,
- strengthen the UN's implementation and monitoring mechanisms in the field of human rights,
- give priority to strengthening countries' implementation of the accepted recommendations of the Universal Periodic Reviews.

3.3 Norway's membership of the Human Rights Council (2009–12)

In the recommendation by the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence (Recommendation No. 397 S (2010–2011) to the Storting) on the deliberations on the white paper on Norway's participation in the 65th session of the General Assembly (Report No. 23 (2010–2011) to the Storting), the Government was requested to *evaluate Norway's membership of the Human Rights Council up to the present, including whether the new council is an improvement on the old in relation to UN human rights efforts.*

Strengthening human rights at the global level, and ensuring the effectiveness of UN bodies that promote human rights, are in Norway's interests. The Government's policy is based on promoting international law, universal human rights and an international legal order. Norway therefore sought to become a member of the Human Rights Council, and in May 2009 we were elected for the period 2009–12. Norway was the candidate with the largest number of votes (177).

3.3.1 From Commission on Human Rights to Human Rights Council

The establishment of the Human Rights Council was a step in UN reform that was unanimously adopted by the heads of state and government at the 2005 World Summit. It was intended to replace the Commission on Human Rights (1946–2006), which was felt to have become politicised, irrelevant and ineffective.

The Human Rights Council is far more flexible than the commission was. It holds both regular



Figure 3.4 A meeting of the Human Rights Council in Geneva, Switzerland, 2011.

Photo: UN Photo/Jean-Marc Ferré

and special sessions together with periodic country reviews (Universal Periodic Reviews, UPRs) several times a year.

3.3.2 In what way is the new Human Rights Council an improvement on the old Commission on Human Rights?

There have been a number of positive developments in the Human Rights Council in recent years in terms of both the types of issue raised and the situations in individual countries, especially in connection with the Arab Spring. The geopolitical changes reflected in the new regional composition of the council have encouraged cross-regional cooperation. Proposals that are not supported by a cross-regional group of countries are becoming increasingly rare, and the equal treatment of all countries through the UPR system provides legitimacy.

The Human Rights Council has established an increasing number of special thematic and country mandates, and appointed independent commissions of inquiry into acute crises. Examples of new thematic mandates are the right to clean water, transitional justice, human rights and envi-

ronment, women and gender equality, and freedom of assembly and association. Examples of country mandates are Iran and Syria. Commissions of inquiry have been set up to investigate acute situations in Cote d'Ivoire, Libya and Syria. These are concrete, targeted measures that strengthen the ability of the international community to deal with major ongoing human rights issues.

3.3.3 Norway's engagement in the Human Rights Council

Norway believes in being a bridge-builder between the different regions and interests represented in the council. At the same time we make it clear that we support the council's working methods and the independence and functions of OHCHR, together with the fundamental rights and freedoms laid down in UN treaties.

The following are some examples of cases where Norway has played a key role.

The Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders. The Special Rapporteur has an important role as a voice for human

Box 3.6 Five-year Review

The Human Rights Council's functions and procedures were reviewed in 2011, with a view to making improvements based on the first five years of its existence.

Norway's strategy for the review was to support moderate proposals for improvements in the council's working methods. Our view was that the council's mandate and working methods had succeeded in making it an active and relevant body. There was a high risk that if the proposals for change were too ambitious they would give rise to counter-proposals that were more likely to damage the mechanisms that had been so painstakingly built up than to result in improvements. We also resisted proposals that we believed would weaken the council's mechanisms and affect the frequency of its meetings.

In spring 2011 the council submitted the review conclusions to the General Assembly. Norway found the results of the review fully acceptable; significant reverses had been avoided and certain improvements had been adopted. The review also showed that there was broad agreement on the institutional framework of the council. The moderate nature of the reform proposals must be counted a success for a body that handles such politically sensitive issues. The council's overall form and organisation are now generally accepted, even though it will still be possible and necessary to find more effective solutions to organisational and procedural problems. It will also be necessary to resist attempts at regular intervals by certain countries to revive opposition.

rights defenders, and her duties include visiting particular countries and discussing the situation of human rights defenders with the authorities, independent institutions and civil society. In March 2011, the mandate was extended by a further three years under Norway's leadership. Since many states regard human rights defenders as a threat to the power and authority of the state, negotiations on renewal of the mandate were difficult.

Discrimination and violence on the grounds of sexual orientation and sexual identity as a human rights problem. In June 2011, the Human Rights Council made a historic decision on this issue. The decision was very controversial and encountered considerable opposition. However, it was supported by a majority in the council, showing that the council is able to deal with controversial issues in a constructive way. The success of the effort was largely due to South Africa's leadership.

The private sector's responsibility for human rights. Norway, together with a cross-regional group consisting of Russia, India, Argentina and Nigeria, has been a driving force in this work. It is a complicated field legally speaking since private legal entities like companies have no obligations under international human rights conventions. However, companies have a corporate social responsibility to respect human rights norms and standards, even though the responsibility may not

be legally binding. In 2008 the UN Special Representative on business and human rights proposed the Protect, Respect, Remedy Framework. In 2011, after difficult negotiations led by Norway in cooperation with a cross-regional group, the Human Rights Council adopted by consensus the Special Representative's proposal for Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. A UN Working Group on Business & Human Rights was also appointed to promote the implementation of the guidelines.

Promotion of women's rights and gender equality. This has been one of Norway's main priorities in the Human Rights Council, and in autumn 2010 we played an active role in the establishment of the Working Group on Discrimination against Women in Law and Practice. Systematic discrimination against women is still widespread in many countries, and the working group will identify and promote good practices related to the elimination of legislation that discriminates against women, such as legislation that prohibits women from owning land or running a business.

3.3.4 The way ahead

During our membership of the Human Rights Council we made strategic efforts to promote our foreign and human rights policy goals in this new and challenging international forum. In order to gain acceptance for our policies, we are dependent on new as well as existing supporters. In addition

to promoting our views, we sought to break up the negative blocs that tend to form in so many areas of UN work. Alliance-building across established groups has become a Norwegian trademark and the results have been good. There is still room for improvement, but we need engagement and participation if we are to steer developments in the right direction. This is at the core of our participation in the Human Rights Council.

The Human Rights Council is increasingly perceived as a relevant, effective body that promotes and protects human rights. Ensuring that this positive development continues will be an important task in the time ahead.

Efforts should now be concentrated more closely on mainstreaming human rights in UN activities and ensuring that a rights-based approach is adopted throughout the UN system.

The Government will

- build further on the knowledge and experience Norway has gained through membership of the Human Rights Council, and continue our active participation as observer in the Council.

3.4 Women's rights and gender equality

Promoting women's rights and gender equality internationally is an important political priority for Norway. Gender equality is crucial to safeguarding women's human rights; women have the right to influence their futures and their daily lives in the same way as men. Gender equality is also an important tool for promoting peace and development.

Investment in women and gender equality is also smart economics, as the World Bank demonstrated in its World Development Report 2012, which focuses on gender equality. Removing barriers to women's ownership rights and their right to education and paid work increases economic efficiency and productivity. Because women often invest their incomes in their children's health and education, securing their economic participation and rights also has positive consequences for long-term development. It is well known that women's participation in peace processes often gives added value, for example by bringing a broader set of political and social issues into the process and by making it more inclusive and legitimate. This in turn increases the possibility of achieving robust, lasting peace agreements that

take the whole population into account and establish a firm foundation for the building of a democratic and egalitarian society.

The white paper *On Equal Terms: Women's Rights and Gender Equality in Development Policy (Report No. 11 (2007–2008) to the Storting)*, and the *Government's Plan of Action for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (2000)* form the foundation of the Government's proactive policy for women's rights and gender equality. The action plan has now been updated and strengthened by a new plan, *Women, Peace and Security: a Strategic Plan 2011–2013*. Norway attaches importance to safeguarding women's political and economic participation and rights, combating violence against women, and strengthening women's sexual and reproductive health and rights. We also give priority to promoting the inclusion of women on an equal basis in peace processes and conflict management, and their participation on equal terms in the efforts to combat climate change and environmental degradation, and prevent humanitarian crises.

3.4.1 The significance of the UN's role in promoting women's rights

Norway's approach to gender equality has attracted the interest of developing countries and emerging economies for many years. Norwegian women's participation in the labour market is much higher than the average for the developed countries in the OECD.

The UN has played a decisive role in the efforts to strengthen women's rights and promote gender equality.

The Commission on the Status of Women. Norway attaches great importance to the normative work of the commission and will seek to ensure its continued relevance and significance. The annual meetings are also a good arena for contact and cooperation between the UN, member states and non-governmental organisations and networks. Norway considers it especially important that women's organisations in the South are given the opportunity to participate and engage with the UN system and other influential actors. We will continue to support these efforts in the time ahead.

The Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). The Government considers that the

recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in response to the reports submitted by Norway and the other states parties to the convention provide a good basis for the efforts to promote women's rights and gender equality in the various countries. Civil society organisations at country level draw up their own reports on the status of gender equality in their country. In Norway the Norwegian Forum for Women and Development, FOKUS, is responsible for such reports. We have been providing financial support for NGO reporting in developing countries and will continue to do so.

The international community has agreed on ambitious goals for promoting women's empowerment and rights in all areas of society, for example at the 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing and the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo. NGOs played a significant role at both conferences and influenced the outcomes.

The UN has strongly influenced the member states' development of their own policies for strengthening women's rights, promoting gender equality and changing systematic discriminatory practices. This has reinforced the work of women's organisations and institutions that promote gender equality in member states. Norway wishes to emphasise the Organisation's relevance in this field and considers it important that women's rights and gender equality are mainstreamed into UN activities.

3.4.2 UN Women

The theme of women's rights and gender equality has been given a place in most UN organisations in line with the development of the UN system. However, efforts in this field have been fragmented, and there has been no single body to give the issue weight and visibility. The merging of four existing UN mechanisms to form UN Women (the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women) in July 2010 is therefore one of the most important results of the reform process in the last few years. Norway played a leading role in this reform.

UN Women's three most important tasks are to support UN organisations in formulating policies and standards on gender equality; assist member states in introducing and complying with the standards, including forging partnerships with civil society; and coordinate and monitor the

efforts of all parts of the UN system to mainstream the gender perspective.

Norway expects UN Women to hold the whole UN system accountable for delivering better results on women's rights and gender equality. We will seek to ensure that UN Women plays a proactive role in promoting women's rights both at country level and internationally, which is particularly important now that the global gender equality agenda is under pressure.

Norway gives high priority to cooperation with UN Women. We also wish to play a constructive role as partner by participating in the Executive Board and actively supporting the organisation's mandate and role. We are one of the largest core contributors to the organisation, and a major supporter of programmes and projects at country level.

3.4.3 Pressure on the global gender equality agenda

The gender equality agenda is under increasing pressure, and it has proved to be difficult in some cases to ensure continuing support for established political and legal obligations intended to strengthen women's rights and promote gender equality.

An example of this tendency is that for the first time it was impossible to reach agreement on an outcome document at the Commission on the Status of Women 2012. The reason for this was the broad campaign that was mounted by an alliance of conservative states, NGOs and religious communities to weaken the international women's rights and gender equality agenda, norms and framework that had previously been agreed on. The campaign is being conducted in many forums and at many levels, and is a considerable challenge for Norway and other progressive countries that are seeking to empower women. The main target of attack by these conservative forces is women's sexual and reproductive health and rights. Norway will therefore give high priority to mobilising a broad alliance to work against the campaign. We do not intend to allow the international efforts to promote women's rights and gender equality to be weakened.

Men's attitudes contribute to the deficit in women's rights, and improving them is a crucial part of the work for women's rights. UN organisations must therefore give high priority to boys as a target group in their work with young people, in order to counteract stereotyping and promote a culture of respect for girls' and women's rights.



Figure 3.5 Pregnant women in Bongouanou, Côte d'Ivoire, 2012.

Photo: UN Photo/Hien Macline

Every UN organisation must do more to mainstream women's rights into all its activities and translate normative policies into practical action that will make a difference. In economic recessions and crises there is always a risk that support for promoting women's rights and gender equality will be reduced.

Norway is regarded as an advocate for women's rights and gender equality at the international level. At home we have come farther than most countries, and our experience is often in demand in the UN and at the bilateral level. We will continue to campaign for women's rights in the UN, and the Government will build alliances to promote gender equality policies in the UN system. The foreign service missions play an important role in this work, and will be used more systematically as listening posts and to set standards. The Government also intends to build alliances with countries in the South with a view to correcting their perception that gender equality is a Western idea and a Western agenda. We will continue seeking to ensure that civil society has a prominent place in UN gender equality activities and a real influence on policy-making. This will increase

the relevance of the UN and set an example of the role civil society should play at country level. At the same time we will make it clear that the responsibility for meeting a country's political and human rights obligations in the field of gender equality lies with the authorities themselves.

The Government will

- seek to ensure that women's rights and gender equality are given higher priority throughout the UN system, and that UN Women is a robust and effective organisation,
- seek to build alliances and mobilise support for preventing the international commitments to women's rights from being weakened,
- work for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security in all UN activities,
- seek to ensure that women's rights and gender equality are given a central place in the post-2015 agenda and other relevant processes,
- intensify the work for women's sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Box 3.7 Sexual and reproductive health and rights

Norway gives sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) special priority. Sexual and reproductive health refers to people's right to a responsible, satisfactory and safe sexual life and to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children. This means that women, men and young people should have access to contraception and health services that deal with sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy and delivery, and post-natal care. Norway believes that it also includes the right to safe, legal abortion. Sexual rights are human rights, and include the individual's right to have access to sexual and reproductive health care services and sexuality education, their right to respect for bodily integrity, and the freedom to choose whether or not to be sexually active and to choose their partner. SRHR are decisive for ensuring the economic and political participation of women and girls.

Many SRHR-related issues are extremely controversial at the international level, and have come under strong pressure during negotiations in the UN, such as those in the Commission on

the Status of Women and the International Conference on Population and Development. Maintaining previously established consensus and ensuring further progress in this policy area is an important goal for Norway's work at the UN. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Health Organization (WHO) and UN Women are key actors in these efforts.

Norway already plays a key role in promoting this agenda internationally, but we intend to intensify our efforts in the time to come. An important part of this work will be to mobilise and cooperate with like-minded countries and civil society actors, especially in the South, and we are currently developing an SRHR strategy for this purpose. Norwegian NGOs will be invited to participate in an SRHR network, and Norway will take the initiative to continue and intensify Nordic cooperation on SRHR. Another concrete measure will be to double our support for family planning to NOK 150 million in 2013, with the intention of continuing this support up to 2020, making a total of NOK 1.2 billion.

4 A sustainable world: the United Nations and economic, social, humanitarian and environmental issues

The UN's work in the economic and social area covers a broad range of issues – from finding joint solutions to climate change issues and global environmental problems, use of resources, and health, to development cooperation, where poverty reduction is the primary objective. These are complex global problems that are becoming increasingly interlinked. The strength of the UN lies in its dual role as an arena for intergovernmental debate and decision-making and its operational role. As an intergovernmental arena, the UN provides guidelines for international cooperation on global problems and challenges and for achieving results at country level.

It is in Norway's interest to be involved in the development, regulation, financing and implementation of global solutions to global problems, for example in areas such as food security, environmental issues and climate change. There is a close link between our national political interests and global efforts in the same areas, and it is important for us to have an international arena where we can promote our views and interests.

Norway makes large contributions to the UN's development and humanitarian activities. We con-

sider it essential that the UN organisations should have as their overarching objectives poverty reduction and a rights-based approach should be overarching objectives that ensure involvement of vulnerable groups such as minorities, persons with disabilities, and children and young people. Mainstreaming of women's rights and gender equality, as described in the white paper *On Equal Terms: Women's Rights and Gender Equality in International Development Policy* (Report No. 11 (2007–2008) to the Storting), and of environmental considerations, as set out in the white paper *Towards Greener Development* (Report No. 14 (2010–2011) to the Storting), are cross-cutting priorities in our cooperation with UN organisations.

The overall context and framework conditions governing the UN's activities in the economic and social area are changing. Some countries are experiencing strong economic growth and have moved from low-income to middle-income status. The Global South is an increasingly differentiated group of countries with different needs and priorities in relation to the UN. However, economic growth has not been accompanied by more equi-

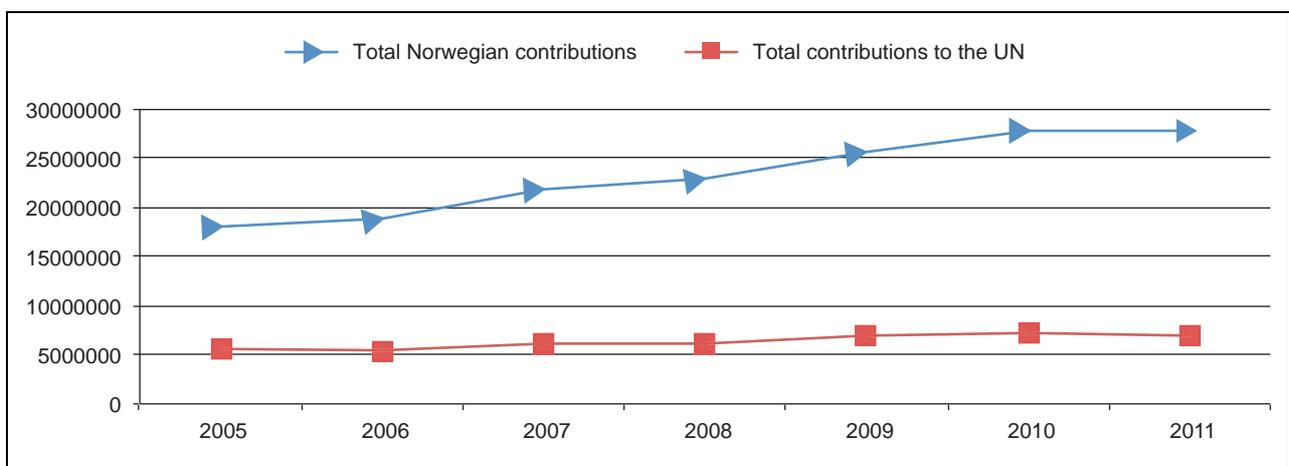


Figure 4.1 Total Norwegian development assistance, total contributions to the UN and trends in the proportion of total Norwegian contributions to the UN, NOK thousands.

Source: Norad's statistics database

table distribution, and a growing number of poor people now live in middle-income countries. The recognition that development aid is only one factor in economic and social development has caused a shift in focus towards other sources of funding and other partnerships. The UN in its role as political arena, together with its operational development and humanitarian organisations, will have to adapt to these new conditions.

4.1 The UN and the political agenda

Norway makes use of the various UN arenas to promote the development of binding international guidelines, to influence the international agenda and to seek international support for Norwegian perspectives, ideals and objectives. Our success in these efforts depends on the effectiveness of the alliances we form.

4.1.1 The UN's role in sustainable development – the way forward after Rio

Promoting sustainable development is a key objective of the UN and of Norway's UN policy. The growing pressure on the world's natural resources and the growing recognition of the links between environmental and development issues call for a policy that integrates the economic, social and environmental dimensions. Norway is committed to taking a lead in enhancing the UN's engagement in environment and development. This means that we will focus especially on strategies that combine the objectives in these areas.

An example of an integrated strategy where Norway is a prime mover is the efforts under the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to strengthen global fisheries management. Improving fisheries management will have positive effects in the environmental, economic and social sectors: it will reduce overexploitation (environmental), and provide a more lasting source of income (economic) and stable access to nutritious marine protein (social).



Figure 4.2 The High-level Panel at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio (Rio+20), 21 June 2012.

Photo: UN Photo/Erskind Debebe

Box 4.1 Climate change

In Norway's view, the central framework for international climate cooperation is the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (the Climate Change Convention). The convention's ultimate objective is to achieve stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. Norway attaches decisive importance to the establishment of a binding international regime under the Climate Change Convention. In the white paper on Norwegian climate policy (Report No. 21 (2011–2012) to the Storting), the Government stated that it will promote a broad, ambitious climate agreement that sets specific targets for emissions reductions that apply to both developed and major developing countries and that are in accordance with the target of limiting the average rise in the global mean temperature to no more than 2 °C above the pre-indus-

trial level. Certain large developing countries are responsible for the fastest rise in greenhouse gas emissions and for an increasing share of global greenhouse gas emissions, and it will be essential to limit their emissions if the target is to be achieved.

Even though greenhouse gas emissions have been somewhat reduced as a result of the Climate Change Convention and the Kyoto Protocol, total global emissions continue to rise, and it will be very difficult to achieve the two-degree target. Although the poorest and least developed countries have the least responsibility for the problem, they are the most seriously affected by the consequences. International cooperation on adaptation to climate change, preventing climate-related disasters and reducing greenhouse gas emissions is therefore essential.

The agreement reached in Rio+20 on developing Sustainable Development Goals – specific goals for sustainable development based on the model of the Millennium Development Goals – was considered by Norway to be an important result. The Sustainable Development Goals are intended to mainstream the three dimensions of sustainable development: social, economic and environmental, and will apply to all countries. An intergovernmental Open Working Group established by the General Assembly will develop a proposal for the Sustainable Development Goals, and the Government intends to play an active role in its deliberations.

Norway considers it important that the Rio outcome document recognises that sustainable development hinges on women's participation on equal terms in political and economic decision processes. The use of gender-sensitive statistics was a Norwegian priority that was successfully incorporated. Such statistics are essential for measuring how far political commitments are being implemented in practice and for directing resources to areas where they are needed. The affirmation of women's equal rights to property, inheritance and other resources provides a good basis for eliminating discriminatory practices at country level, which is a high priority for the Government.

It is important for the Government's Energy+ initiative that the Secretary-General's initiative on Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) was also included in the Rio outcome document. The objectives of SE4All are to ensure universal access to modern energy services, to double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency, and to double the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix by 2030. The Government will give priority to following up the initiative in the UN system and coordinating these efforts with our own Energy+ initiative.

The Rio outcome document states that access to safe, sufficient and nutritious food is a human right, and emphasises the need to revitalise the agricultural and rural development sectors and reduce food loss and waste. In future food production will depend on adaptation to climate change and sustainable management of biodiversity, including ecosystem services. The outcome document recognises the key contribution of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), which has had a stronger role to play since the reform of FAO. The CFS is now the main body for coordinating the work on food security, and the Government will support the committee in this role. We will make use of our prominent role as seafood producer and steward of marine resources in international negotiations, including those in the CFS.

Green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication was one of the two main themes of the 2012 Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio. “Green economy” means an economy that, while promoting all the economic objectives (jobs, prosperity, social goods etc.), involves a smaller risk of environmental damage and ecological scarcities. The Rio conference showed that there is no common understanding of what a green economy involves, despite the affirmation in the outcome document that it is a tool for achieving sustainable development. Mechanisms were established at the Rio conference to assist countries, on request, to implement green development strategies. Norway supported the proposal for broader measures of progress that complement gross domestic product by including natural capital and the well-being of the population, as well as strengthening cooperation on promoting sustainability reporting by businesses. Norway is well ahead in these areas, and the Government will participate in further international efforts with this aim.

Norway considers it very positive that the outcome document emphasised that governments need to finance sustainable development by mobilising national financing and finding innovative sources of finance (in addition to private and public investment and development aid). At the conference we took the initiative to include the need to combat corruption and illicit financial flows in the text in addition to financing measures. We are also pleased that the conference encouraged countries to adhere to and implement the UN Convention against Corruption. The developing countries advocated the establishment of a new financing mechanism, but there was no agreement on this issue. However, as a compromise it was agreed to establish an intergovernmental process to assess financing needs and propose an effective sustainable development financing strategy to facilitate the mobilisation of resources. The process will be implemented by an intergovernmental committee of 30 experts nominated by regional groups, and the Government will follow the committee’s work.

The other main theme of the conference was the institutional framework for sustainable development. The discussions focused mainly on the need for two reforms of the UN system: the replacement of the *Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD)* by a more effective body, and the strengthening or upgrading of UNEP.

It was agreed to replace the CSD with a new High-Level political forum on sustainable develop-

ment and that processes will be initiated in the General Assembly to decide on its structure, mandate and functions. The Government will seek to ensure that the forum has more effective tools at its disposal than the CSD has, such as universal periodic reviews, and that it is given a central role in implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and other key proposals in the Rio outcome document.

The Rio conference confirmed the need to strengthen the international environmental governance system. It was agreed at the conference that UNEP should be strengthened and upgraded in accordance with its role as the leading global environmental authority, among other things by making membership of its governing body universal. However, it was not possible to reach agreement on the proposal to upgrade the organisation to a specialised agency, which is the Government’s long-term objective. Norway will continue to support the efforts to strengthen UNEP, in the short term particularly by strengthening the financing and supporting the establishment of a more efficient governance structure.

4.1.2 A common post-2015 development agenda

The UN Millennium Declaration and the eight Millennium Development Goals have dominated international development efforts for the last 12 years. The MDGs have served as guidelines for Norwegian and international development policy, and formed the basis of strong, purposeful, individual-centred efforts to improve health and education and promote gender equality.

The concrete and straightforward MDGs have a strong mobilising force, and focus on results and efficiency. However, they do not really address the structural causes of poverty. Countries at war and in conflict, and marked by widespread discrimination, have made the least progress. Today, 70 % of children who do not attend school live in conflict areas, and there is little likelihood that they will be able to go to school until the conflict is resolved. Other areas that are not covered by the MDGs are the widespread illegal capital flows and the theft of natural resources in developing countries.

The Government will seek to ensure that the post-2015 development agenda takes greater account of the structural causes of poverty. The new goals must reflect the fact that more effective measures against poverty and better access to health and education services are closely linked with a greater capacity for economic development

and growth that takes account of environmental and social considerations and equitable distribution. This means that measures to combat climate change, environmental degradation and the growing pressure on natural resources, together with the principles of anti-discrimination and gender equality, conflict resolution and respect for human rights, should be factored into the development agenda.

There is broad agreement that the new goals for the post-2015 development agenda should be as specific and straightforward as the current goals, and with the same capacity for mobilising the international community. Norway believes that several of the MDGs, such as those for the health and education sectors, should be continued, if necessary with adjustments. For example, much progress has been made on access to primary schooling since 2000, but the focus has been on quantifiable targets. Fresh, long-term investment in relevant quality education for individuals that will also benefit society is what is needed to combat poverty in both the least developed and the middle-income countries. The poorest countries should be assisted to develop their higher education systems, especially teacher training, so that they can draw up systems and curriculums that meet their needs. UNESCO can provide valuable input in this respect through its institutes for curriculum development, educational planning and statistics.

The new development goals must also take into account that 70 % of the world's poor live in middle-income countries. The gap between rich and poor in these countries is widening rapidly, and at the same time many traditional donor countries are suffering from a serious economic recession. This raises new questions about the roles of donors, recipients and national wealth distribution policies. A new global development policy agenda should reflect these issues.

There is growing agreement that, like the proposed Sustainable Development Goals, the goals of the new agenda should be directed at all countries, not only those in the South. The Government will seek to ensure that after 2015 there will be one set of goals to which all countries are committed.

4.1.3 The links between national and global policy

The UN is important to Norway as a global forum for addressing challenges that need to be dealt with internationally. The advantage of the UN lies

in its importance as a global norm-setter. The Government considers that detailed solutions to problems, and their implementation, should be left to the regional and national levels. A good example is the Law of the Sea and fisheries, where the UN sets out the general, global rules, which are then adjusted to regional and national needs.

The UN also has an important role as a source of knowledge and information, which is available to all countries at the same time. Knowledge and research are also necessary for following norms and rules. For example, research and underlying data are a prerequisite for sustainable management of natural resources. Thus the Nansen programme – a collaboration between FAO and Norway on surveying and monitoring of fisheries resources and education and training, both bilaterally and through FAO – makes an important contribution to institution-building and sustainable fisheries management in selected countries.

Achieving global targets for food security, nutrition and sustainable fisheries management, and for reducing loss of biodiversity, depends on fundamental scientific knowledge and a sound management regime. The UN needs to develop closer cooperation with scientific institutions to obtain sound knowledge on which to base policy development. Problems relating to environment and climate change, poverty and food security are often inextricably linked, and require a coherent approach and good coordination within the UN system.

There is a growing gap between the number of international commitments and the member states' capacity to put them into practice. The effectiveness and relevance of the UN depend not only on what the member states can agree on, and what importance other member states attach to UN decisions, but also on the member states' capacity to implement their international commitments. The Government therefore considers that more emphasis should be given to how to ensure compliance with obligations at country level. UN funds, programmes and specialised agencies play a significant role in capacity- and institution-building. Norway will take the initiative to ensure that performance-based frameworks and evaluations do more to document the results of normative work at country level.

Expertise and patience are two of the prerequisites for gaining acceptance for our views in the UN. The clearer our position, the greater our influence. Our influence is further increased by the fact that we have a predictable voice across all relevant forums. This is particularly important for

ensuring that issues we consider to be cross-cutting, such as human rights, women's rights and gender equality, together with environmental considerations, are taken into account. In the Government's view, a coherent and predictable UN policy will strengthen Norway's influence in the UN. Chapters 5 and 6 describe the elements of such a policy.

The Government will

- give priority to the UN's efforts to promote sustainable development with a view to integrating the environmental, economic and social dimensions,
- seek to strengthen UNEP in the short term and work for the establishment of a World Environment Organisation in the long term,
- seek to ensure that the new forum on sustainable development is effective,
- give the global challenges of urbanisation more prominence and consider increasing Norwegian multilateral aid to the prevention and upgrading of slum areas,
- strengthen UN efforts in the health sector,
- strengthen UN efforts in the education sector,
- work for new, concrete post-2015 development goals that reflect current needs and realities, and address the structural causes of poverty,
- promote the development of global sustainable development goals,
- make active efforts to strengthen the UN's role as a knowledge organisation for improving the management of natural resources and ecosystem services,
- Be proactive in strengthening and further developing global work for food security through the UN.

4.2 Development cooperation in a state of change

The framework conditions for development cooperation are changing. Development aid is playing a diminishing role in funding development, and the growth in the number of middle-income countries without a corresponding reduction in poverty has drawn attention to the issue of equitable distribution at the national level. New actors and forms of cooperation are becoming more important. All these factors create both opportunities and challenges. The UN needs to adapt to this new situation and enter into new partnerships.

Norway will take part in discussions between interested member states across regional groups on the need to strengthen the governance structures for UN development and humanitarian activities. Strengthening the whole UN as a forum and platform for development policy dialogue and agenda-setting will also be discussed. The existing cooperation between like-minded countries such as the Nordic Plus (the Nordic countries, Ireland, the UK and the Netherlands), and the already established cooperation with countries in the South are a good foundation for these efforts. If the political dialogue in the new development architecture takes place within a UN framework, this could lead to fresh political room for manoeuvre and new operational roles. One of Norway's main objectives is to shift the focus towards the role of national policy in development and the individual countries' own responsibilities in this respect.

4.2.1 Financing for development

Financing is a central underlying issue in discussions on common goals and strategies, from climate negotiations to reform of UN development efforts.

Norway will seek to ensure that the debate on financing for development in the UN focuses even more strongly on financing sources other than development aid. The developing countries' mobilisation of their own resources through taxation, preventing illicit capital flows, and innovative financing, and the follow-up role of UN organisations, have a large part to play. Norway's experience that gender equality and women's participation are essential to economic growth and development is a key element of our approach to these issues.

The relevant UN organisations are able to make valuable contributions to the work on equitable distribution by analysing the relationship between economic growth and economic and social disparities. The analyses will enable UN country teams to advise the national authorities on how to formulate national policies that promote poverty reduction, more equitable distribution and greater stability. Norway can offer its experience of a distribution policy based on the Norwegian/Nordic welfare model, women's participation in the labour market, tripartite cooperation and a taxation system that emphasises redistribution and efficient use of resources. In our work with the UN, we make active use of the lessons

Box 4.2 Innovative financing

In the climate change negotiations, Norway is a champion of the greater use of innovative financing. Prime Minister Stoltenberg co-chaired the High-Level Advisory Group on Climate Change Financing established by the Secretary-General, which produced recommendations on how USD 100 billion a year can be obtained for climate actions in developing countries. The Advisory Group's report contained a number of innovative mechanisms for filling the financing gap, many of which Norway supports. The challenge here is to ensure broad international support.

The Government is working in cooperation with other countries on the introduction of a currency transaction levy to raise funding for global public goods, development and climate action. Before such a levy can be introduced, it has to win broad international support and be endorsed by influential countries. Norway attempted to have a reference to such a levy included in a General Assembly resolution, but without success.

learned from programmes such as the new Tax for Development and Oil for Development programmes, and from our efforts to combat tax havens and illegal capital flows.

4.2.2 Partnerships

Changes in the relations between states, the market and individuals pave the way for cooperation between a range of actors from the private sector, civil society, and research and other academic communities. The UN system needs to find new, innovative ways of involving these actors.

The UN system can facilitate forms of cooperation such as South–South and triangular cooperation. The Government considers that the UN organisations should engage in dialogue with new actors and in cooperation at country level.

Norway has been among the leading advocates of linking the private sector, global funds and philanthropists with UN processes, especially through the Clean Energy for Development initiative and in the health sector. The Committee on World Food Security (CFS) is an example of the involvement of non-state actors. Norway regards this approach as extremely positive, and will seek to ensure that existing structures facilitate partici-

Box 4.3 The UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

UNCTAD has been in crisis for several years, and has been unable to deliver satisfactorily on its mandate. The UN Joint Inspection Unit reviewed the organisation and produced a very critical report on its management. The report is currently under consideration by the board of UNCTAD. Norway has stated that it is prepared to assist UNCTAD to make the necessary changes.

The Doha mandate adopted at UNCTAD XIII affirmed UNCTAD's core activities in the area of trade and development. Norway considers it important to ensure that UNCTAD continues to work with debt management issues, and we have financed an UNCTAD project on Draft Principles on Promoting Responsible Sovereign Lending and Borrowing. The organisation's work complements that of the World Bank and the IMF in the field of debt management and financial development. Another priority area for Norway in the Doha negotiations was the integration of women's rights and gender equality in UNCTAD's activities. In this area the wording of the mandate was stronger than in previous mandates.

Norway will seek to ensure that UNCTAD's work is perceived as relevant by the WTO and the World Bank.

pation by non-state actors. However, it is important that this does not lead to fragmentation and extra work.

Norway has been a strong advocate for access by civil society representatives to UN meetings, processes and conferences. We have a tradition of participation by civil society, including representatives of youth groups, in our delegations to UN meetings. The Government will standardise the practice of participation by such actors in Norwegian delegations to UN meetings, which varies today from forum to forum and from one ministry to another.

There is a special need to improve young people's participation in the UN on a free and independent basis. The Government will support Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's initiative to appoint a Special Adviser for Youth, who will be responsible for drawing up an overall plan for the UN's work for youth in the years ahead. The Government will provide funding for the establishment of

a UN youth forum on the lines of for example the International Indigenous Forum. Here young people and their organisations will be able to influence UN policy and engage in a dialogue with member states.

The Government will

- strengthen the UN's role as a global political forum for economic and social issues, and work to make ECOSOC stronger and more effective,
- strengthen the efforts of the UN, the World Bank and other multinational development institutions to promote equitable distribution between and within countries,
- seek to introduce global levies that limit the negative effects of globalisation and create global redistribution mechanisms,
- promote the introduction of new global financing mechanisms for promoting redistribution and funding for global public goods,
- seek to ensure that efforts are made in the UN to combat tax havens, illegal capital flows and financial secrecy,
- advocate that the UN puts national resource mobilisation on the agenda,
- give priority to furthering support for the UNCTAD Draft Principles on Promoting Responsible Sovereign Lending and Borrowing,
- support access by civil society to UN meetings, processes and conferences,
- review and standardise practice and support schemes for participation by civil society in Norwegian delegations,
- support the Secretary-General's work for youth and his initiative to appoint a Special Adviser for Youth, and work for the establishment of a UN forum for youth on the lines of the International Indigenous Forum.

4.3 The UN as a driver of development

With their broad range of different and sometimes unique mandates, the UN organisations are in a good position to promote change in developing countries. In the white paper *Climate, Conflict and Capital* (Report No. 13 (2008–2009) to the Storting), the Government emphasised that health and education, governance, agriculture and general capacity and institution-building are particularly appropriate sectors for Norwegian multilateral support. The Government is also highlighting areas of high political priority such as climate

change, Norway's Climate and Forest Initiative, peace initiatives, gender equality, management of non-renewable resources, and combating illicit financial flows through our work in the multilateral organisations.

However, the UN's operational organisations are still facing the problems of fragmentation and poor coordination that are causing the UN development system to deliver less than it is capable of. As one of the largest contributors to UN organisations and a champion of a UN-based global platform, Norway has played an active role as supporter and driver of reform.

4.3.1 From words to action – the UN's role at country level

The Government considers that the most important consequence for the UN of changes in the development system will be that the UN organisations will focus less on projects and more on providing expert advice as well as capacity- and institution-building. It is important to identify areas that should not be the responsibility of the UN and areas where other actors would be more suitable cooperation partners for Norway.

Norway has given priority to the work of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on good governance, environment and sustainable development, for example its efforts to ensure that environmental considerations are mainstreamed into the various countries' poverty reduction strategies. In the Government's view, UNDP has achieved varying results at country level and the organisation has a tendency to spread its efforts too thinly. In our dialogue with UNDP, we are therefore stressing the need for better performance and more concentration on important areas in countries where performance has not been satisfactory.

UNICEF's primary task is to safeguard children's rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Education is one of the organisation's focus areas, and Norway has for many years been cooperating with UNICEF on protecting the right of every child to receive a quality education. In 2010, Norway provided sufficient support through UNICEF for 500 000 children to attend school (Norad's Result Report 2010).

The health sector is an example of an area where there is close cooperation between the actors involved. Norway will continue to advocate innovation in this area through cooperation with



Figure 4.3 Azerbaijan.

Photo: UNICEF/Giacomo Pirozzi

partners consisting of states, civil society and the business sector.

The UN and the World Bank both have a responsibility for improving coordination at country level, and the cooperation between these organisations needs to be strengthened. In the Government's view a permanent division of work is not always either appropriate or desirable, since who does what depends on the situation in the individual country. However, this does not mean that the respective governing bodies should not send clear signals and provide incentives for cooperation. The Government will encourage greater use of joint risk assessment at the country level based on the tool developed jointly by the UN and the World Bank, and advocate that the World Bank participates to a greater extent in joint planning and cooperation on implementation. This is particularly important for macroeconomic policy and budget cooperation, and in order to link short-term engagement with more long-term sustainable development. The Government will also work for further decentralisation of decision-making authority and for reform incentives enabling the UN and the World Bank to collaborate at country level. These efforts require closer cooperation

between the two organisations at intergovernmental, headquarters and above all country level.

The UN system has shown that it is capable of adaptation and innovation. However, the UN's functions, financing, capacity, partnerships and structures, including governance structures, need to be reviewed if the Organisation is to adapt more effectively to the new framework conditions and the involvement of new actors, and if the UN system is to be capable of dealing with new and existing challenges. The Government will work together with other member states to ensure that these issues are debated in the period up to 2015.

4.3.2 A more effective UN: Delivering as One

The Government believes that reform is crucial to ensuring the continued relevance and greater effectiveness of UN organisations at country level. The challenges identified in the evaluations of the UN reform/Delivering as One must be addressed. The following are weaknesses and focus areas that have been identified so far.

Reform requires good leadership. The Secretary-General and the heads of the UN organisations must send a clear message and provide

Box 4.4 UN-REDD – environment and development, innovation, and Norwegian influence

The United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD) is a collaborative effort under which FAO, UNEP, UNDP and the World Bank are assisting developing countries to reduce forest degradation and emissions from deforestation. The programme was established in 2008 following a Norwegian initiative, and is funded through the Norwegian Government's International Climate and Forest Initiative. Currently it has five donors: the EU, Denmark, Japan, Spain and Norway.

UN-REDD is an example of how earmarking puts specific themes with high priority, such as climate change and deforestation, on the UN agenda. For example, in 2012 the more comprehensive programme REDD+ was mentioned as a priority area in the Secretary-General's Five-year Action Agenda. Norway succeeded in having certain of our interests, such as gender equality and governance, included in the UN-REDD programme. This is a good example of how we can contribute to innovation and ensure that the UN acts and operates as One UN at both country and global level.

incentives for cooperation at country level. In technical issues, the organisation with the relevant expertise should speak on behalf of the UN system.

The evaluations have shown that bottlenecks in cooperation efforts must be dealt with at headquarters level, and that there is a need for further harmonisation and greater efficiency. Some progress has been made, for example through the harmonisation of procurement rules, which makes it possible to undertake large-scale procurement and has the advantage of economies of scale, but a greater number of administrative tasks could be addressed jointly. The existence of different reporting requirements and planning processes results in extra work and is an obstacle to cooperation. Different ICT systems are getting in the way of information-sharing. Security considerations have in many cases stood in the way of co-location in One UN House.

The central funding mechanism (the Expanded Funding Window) and the One UN Funds at country level are so far the most important tools for advancing the reform. The Government will therefore seek to strengthen the donor base for the Delivering as One programme, both centrally and at country level. In order to mobilise more donors it may be necessary to introduce some degree of earmarking for strategic goals in the Delivering as One programme in addition to general contributions.

Autumn 2012 marked a crossroads in the reform process. The programme countries themselves say there is no way back. In the action plan for his second term of office, the Secretary-General is advocating a second-generation One UN. The Government supports the Secretary-General's initiative, and in the negotiations in autumn 2012 on the framework resolution on UN development activities under the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review, we supported the idea of Delivering as One UN as the main approach to the UN's operational activities at country level. However, the great variation in the developing countries' sizes, income levels and issues to be addressed mean that the approach must be flexible and adapted to each country's specific needs. Through its work in governing bodies and its dialogue with the organisations, the Government will increase the pressure on the organisations to take the necessary steps to promote UN reform at country level.

The Government will

- promote Delivering as One UN as the main approach to the UN's operational activities at country level,
- seek to ensure that UN funds, programmes and specialised agencies actively implement the reforms and send clear messages to their country offices to carry them out and practise financial management,
- seek to increase the authority of UN resident coordinators,
- seek to strengthen cooperation between the UN system and the World Bank.

4.4 The UN's humanitarian efforts

Humanitarian crises are becoming more complex and far-reaching. Climate-related natural disasters affect millions of people every year. Crises increase the risk of malnutrition and the spread of

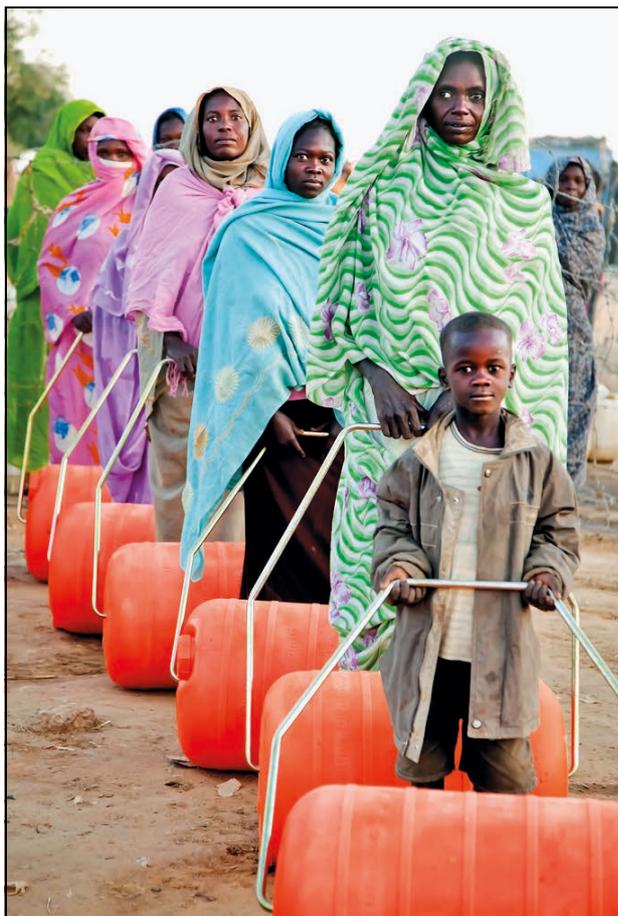


Figure 4.4 Internally displaced people in a camp in El Faser, Darfur, wheeling water containers.

Photo: UN Photo/Albert Gonzalez Farran.

infectious diseases such as malaria, diarrhoea and pneumonia, and lead to the collapse of health care and education services. Internal conflicts and lack of resources force people to flee their homes. Small arms and light weapons, cluster munitions and landmines in the wrong hands have enormous economic, social and humanitarian consequences. The practice of sexualised violence in armed conflict has also increased. By the end of 2011, over 35 million people had been displaced due to conflict, violence or crises, and 26.4 million were internally displaced. Children and young people in developing countries are particularly vulnerable.

The main components of Norway's humanitarian policy are described in the white papers Norwegian Policy on the Prevention of Humanitarian Crises (Report No. 9 (2007–2008) to the Storting), and Norway's Humanitarian Policy (Report No. 40 (2008–2009) to the Storting). The focus of the present white paper is on the UN's central role in the humanitarian system and on how the

Organisation's humanitarian efforts can support Norwegian humanitarian policy.

4.4.1 Global humanitarian challenges

The world expects that the UN will provide protection and assistance in humanitarian crises. However, humanitarian situations are becoming increasingly complex. The principles of impartiality, humanity and neutrality are continually being tested by armed conflict and political instability. The Government believes that these principles are necessary for effective humanitarian assistance, and that there must be a clearly defined division of roles between humanitarian organisations, other civilian efforts, and military forces. This means that such assistance must be based on humanitarian needs and clearly separated from other types of assistance. Strengthening and safeguarding humanitarian law is therefore a high priority for Norway. Given the complexity of international humanitarian situations, this will require greater resources in the years to come.

Strengthening humanitarian law also increases the security of UN personnel, and the Organisation itself is taking steps to protect them. Based on the strategy To Stay and Deliver, the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator has taken the initiative to change the UN's approach from avoiding risk to limiting risk and making it possible for the UN organisations to maintain a presence in difficult situations.

In an armed conflict it is important that UN humanitarian organisations and other humanitarian actors, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), maintain a dialogue with all armed groups, regardless of their background and political affiliation, in order to ensure compliance with humanitarian law and that the civilian population is actually being protected and helped. In some conflicts, attempts have been made to restrict contact with armed groups on the grounds that it might encourage terrorism; for example objections were made to the contact between UN humanitarian organisations and Al-Shebab in Southern Somalia. In 2011, restrictions on such contacts stood in the way of a UN presence and provision of effective humanitarian assistance in a number of cases. Norway therefore considers it important to ensure that measures against terrorism, even when adopted by the Security Council, do not undermine the ability of humanitarian organisations to work in accordance with humanitarian law and humanitarian principles.

4.4.2 The UN's roles: leadership, coordination and financing

The UN is the core of the international humanitarian system, together with the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and a number of NGOs. The Government wishes to emphasise that the UN should have an overarching, strategic role in coordination and policy-making, based on UN norms. The Organisation also has an important role as a mouthpiece in connection with humanitarian crises, and in mobilising the necessary funding. It has now taken important steps to strengthen its humanitarian role.

The establishment of humanitarian funding mechanisms has strengthened the UN's ability to lead and coordinate humanitarian efforts at country level. The establishment of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) marked a new direction in humanitarian financing, and has improved the UN's capacity for rapid response in humanitarian crises. Norway has been one of the largest donors to CERF since its establishment in 2006. In 2011 we contributed NOK 385 million, which amounted to 14.7 % of the total contributions to the fund that year. Norway has made a point of being a stable donor, and pays its contributions early in order to provide the predictability necessary for a more effective crisis response. We will continue to strengthen the humanitarian funding mechanisms, including CERF and the common humanitarian funds. We will also seek to strengthen the capacity of humanitarian pooled funding mechanisms at country level to finance transition situations, including strengthening of local and national capacity to provide effective humanitarian assistance.

Although good progress has been made on reform, the earthquake in Haiti and the floods in Pakistan revealed weaknesses in the UN system's capacity to respond to large-scale natural disasters. The UN Emergency Relief Coordinator is continuing the efforts to strengthen and consolidate existing reforms. These include strengthening OCHA's leadership and presence in the field, especially in complex crises, and a clearer division of work, more strategic appeals, and better management information systems and needs assessments. Together with like-minded countries, Norway will promote the agenda for greater efficiency in UN governing bodies.

Box 4.5 A high level of preparedness and strong partnerships – NORCAP

“In the right place at the right time” is the motto of NORCAP – the standby roster operated by the Norwegian Refugee Council and fully funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

NORCAP's aim is to strengthen the capacity of the humanitarian system, not least of the UN, to provide rapid and effective humanitarian assistance and protection by seconding key personnel. NORCAP was established in 2009, as a merger of various standby rosters operated by the Norwegian Refugee Council.

From 2009 to the end of 2011, the Refugee Council had concluded 1 134 agreements, most of them with UN organisations, such as UNICEF, UNHCR, FAO and the World Food Programme (WFP). At any one time, an average of 150 persons are on assignment to countries in crisis such as South Sudan, Pakistan, the Palestinian Territory and Haiti. NORCAP's roster numbers 850 men and women who can be deployed at 72 hours' notice. Forty per cent are Norwegians, while 60 % are from the South. Forty per cent are women.

Three fields of expertise are in most demand: logistics, coordination and protection, including protection of children. Other fields of expertise that are often called for are crisis management training, information/communication, water and sanitation, food security and livelihoods.

NORCAP also strengthens South–South emergency preparedness and facilitates UN efforts to form and support partnerships.

4.4.3 Partnership

Cooperation and coordination of humanitarian assistance is vital when crises and disasters occur. Partnerships between the UN and NGOs have strengthened the response capacity of the humanitarian system, but these partnerships still need to be further improved. However, the UN has made good progress on concluding agreements with individual countries to make civilian capacity and materiel available to the UN at short notice in the event of a crisis.



Figure 4.5 Turkey has provided a valuable contribution in Somalia. Mogadishu, Somalia, 2011.

Photo: UN Photo/Stuart Price

The UN has developed good relations and established a good division of work with NGOs in many countries, but the relations are often those of contractor and service provider, and are perceived as asymmetric. Reaching people with humanitarian needs requires NGOs that are already on the ground and have partners and experience that can be further developed. Thus in many cases these organisations are in a better position than a UN organisation to provide local humanitarian support. NGOs are particularly relevant in cases where the UN lacks access to an area for security reasons. Norway will therefore seek to ensure that NGOs enter into more strategic cooperation relations with the UN that will lead to a more effective division of work and partnerships on more equal terms. NGOs should be given greater responsibility for cluster coordination at country level, and Norway will follow this up.

New actors are continually entering the scene, both as donors and as operators. After the earthquake in Haiti it is estimated that around 10 000 NGOs were providing emergency assistance in the field. Although many of them were small, the

sheer number demonstrates the difficulties of coordination. Among the new donors are Turkey and Qatar, which are providing valuable contributions. The fact that there is widespread engagement in the UN's humanitarian efforts is promising, and Norway placed great emphasis on this during its chairmanship of the OCHA Donor Support Group.

The growth in the number of actors makes it necessary to broaden the support base for the international humanitarian system and strengthen ownership of humanitarian principles in both the North and the South. Norway will work for greater ownership, a broader humanitarian donor community and an enhanced dialogue with countries in the midst of a humanitarian crisis. We are working in close cooperation with the ICRC and the UN system to achieve these goals.

4.4.4 Disaster prevention and transition situations

The Government believes that long-term measures to prevent and mitigate the effects of natural disasters must be given priority. At the same time

we should seek to ensure the use of short-term measures for effective post-disaster reconstruction and a smoother transition to long-term development. A long-term perspective needs to be adopted right from the beginning, for example with respect to infrastructure, food security and social services. Lack of funding for long-term efforts has proved to be a problem, since it is easier to mobilise resources to address immediate concerns when a crisis has just occurred.

Prevention and early recovery require coordination and an integrated approach, which the Government believes is a UN responsibility. Traditional prevention and climate change adaptation measures are both essential and should be better coordinated. A clear division of labour between the organisations involved is also needed, and health services are a basic requirement for boosting the resilience of local communities. These efforts should be coordinated across the various UN organisations, which will enhance the UN's capacity to coordinate the work of all the actors in question. Norway will seek to ensure that mechanisms are in place to strengthen leadership in the fields of prevention and preparedness.

Norway plays a leading role in the efforts to alter the framework conditions for humanitarian work in order to ensure that more resources are invested in prevention, adaptation to climate change and a more efficient humanitarian emergency response. The management of the common humanitarian funds must also take prevention into account. Flexible funding mechanisms will increase the UN's ability to take steps immediately after a disaster has occurred and prevent the effects of the crisis from escalating. We will promote a more proactive culture of prevention and encourage the UN to play a more distinct role in such efforts.

Norway will also maintain a focus on conflicts that have been forgotten by the public. Funding is particularly a problem in protracted crises, where capacity-building of local and national actors is essential for provision of effective protection and humanitarian assistance. For refugees there are three types of permanent solutions: voluntary repatriation, local integration and resettlement. Although repatriation is the best solution in principle, in many cases it is impossible, for example due to the risk of continued persecution. Resettlement is restricted to a limited number of refugees who cannot be protected in their home country or region. Norway is one of the countries that offers resettlement to the largest numbers of refugees, a



Figure 4.6 Damage in the wake of the 2005 earthquake in Pakistan.

Photo: UN Photo/Evan Schneider.

total of 1 200 a year over the last few years. The Government is considering increasing the quota for resettlement refugees in extraordinary situations, as we did in spring 2011, when the stream of refugees from the Mediterranean region increased substantially due to the situation in North Africa. Norway wishes to maintain its quota for resettlement refugees at the current level while keeping open the possibility of increasing it in extraordinary situations. However, over 7 million refugees globally find themselves in a deadlocked situation, and for many of them the only alternative is local integration in the form of access to the labour market, and to health and education services. In order to find sustainable solutions for integrating internally displaced individuals into local communities, efforts must be made to facilitate closer cooperation between the national authorities, humanitarian actors such as UNHCR and OCHA, and development actors such as UNDP and the World Bank. The focus must be on protecting civilians, combating sexualised vio-

lence and protecting refugees and the internally displaced.

4.4.5 Humanitarian disarmament

Armed violence is an increasingly global problem and a threat to health, life and fundamental human rights. It occurs not only in ordinary conflict situations but also outside them, and causes an average of 2 000 deaths a day, mostly from small arms and light weapons.

Norway has given high priority to combating armed violence, among other things by focusing on humanitarian disarmament, which aims to prevent and reduce armed violence in the broadest sense. Humanitarian disarmament also includes the Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions. Since the Mine Ban Convention entered into force in 1999, the number of new victims has been reduced from over 20 000 a year to well under 5 000. The convention now has 160 states parties. The Convention on Cluster Munitions entered into force in 2010, and has been ratified by more than 70 countries. Norway holds the presidency of the convention for the period 2012–13.

Armed violence needs to be seen as a humanitarian and development problem, and Norway has played an active role in setting the issue on the international agenda. We are cooperating with for example UNDP on strengthening national capacity for prevention and reduction of armed violence in countries where it is a serious problem.

We are also seeking to ensure that international conventions and agreements on humanitarian disarmament are adopted, complied with, and incorporated into national law and practice. However, traditional UN negotiations on weapons with unacceptable consequences for civilians have had few meaningful and concrete results. The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) requires consensus among all its 114 states parties for the adoption of new legal instruments, and has mainly focused on regulation rather than prohibition. This made it impossible to obtain a ban on landmines or cluster munitions within the existing mechanisms. Both the Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions were therefore negotiated outside the UN, in processes that were driven by a partnership of civil society, humanitarian organisations, relevant UN

organisations and interested states. However, a number of UN field-based organisations had a central role in the negotiations on both conventions, and the UN provided high-level political support and practical assistance throughout the process.

The UN's operational activities are also important for the implementation of international agreements. Organisations like UNDP and UNICEF have programmes for strengthening national capacity to undertake mine clearance and offer assistance to victims. However, some UN organisations have a tendency to be bureaucratic, ineffective and of little relevance in both policy discussions and practical implementation. Norway will seek to ensure that the most relevant organisations intensify their efforts in this area. Grants allocated through various channels, mainly NGOs, can be used strategically to support Norwegian priorities, enabling us to assist countries to comply with their obligations under the various conventions.

The Government will

- seek to strengthen the UN's leadership role in humanitarian crises,
- mobilise more donors and supporters for humanitarian efforts in general and for UN humanitarian efforts in particular,
- contribute to building partnerships, especially through the standby rosters under the Norwegian Refugee Council,
- seek to strengthen the UN's role as a voice for humanitarian principles, and safeguard the division of roles between humanitarian operations, other types of civilian efforts and military peacekeeping forces and political operations,
- seek to strengthen the integration of crisis and disaster prevention efforts into UN activities and UN funds and programmes,
- participate, in cooperation with NGOs and the UN, in developing practical solutions for funding the transition from humanitarian assistance to long-term development assistance,
- seek to strengthen the capacity of UN organisations to help countries implement the Mine Ban Convention, the Convention on Cluster Munitions, and other such instruments, especially through capacity-building among national authorities in the countries concerned.

5 Results, influence and control

UN organisations are important for implementing Norway's foreign and development policy priorities, and we concentrate on organisations and thematic initiatives that are important to our interests and political priorities. The Government wishes to maintain a high level of contributions to the UN system in order to promote the UN's mandate and support the implementation of tasks that Norway and other countries have assigned to the UN. We follow the performance of UN organisations, and decide on our financial contributions in relation to the results achieved.

Norway will use its position as a major UN donor and partner to strengthen UN organisations through its work on the governing bodies of UN funds, programmes and specialised agencies, and through direct dialogue with the UN system. Our objective is to help UN organisations, individually and collectively, to deliver better results. In recent years, the Government has devoted considerable resources to professionalising Norway's work on the boards of UN funds and programmes to promote greater acceptance of our policies. This chapter discusses the Government's approach and its priorities in relation to our participation in governing bodies and organisational funding and assessments.

The way UN organisations' activities are funded directly influences their effectiveness, and there are advantages and disadvantages to the different forms of support. Norway's intention is that its contributions to the UN should help to improve results and provide greater predictability, which is necessary to ensure strategic planning and management in UN activities. We will therefore maintain a high general level of core contributions to UN funds and programmes. In addition, we will continue to consider making multi-year indicative commitments to promote long-term planning and implementation by UN organisations.

5.1 Priorities in Norwegian UN policy

UN organisations differ from other recipients of Norwegian aid in that Norway is entitled to sit on

governing bodies, which allows us to participate in developing guidelines not only for the use of our financial contributions, but also for the organisations' overall activities. In the recommendation of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence on a Norwegian budget strategy for the UN (Recommendation S No. 84 (2010–2011)), the Storting expressed its support for this approach. The results of our efforts to exert influence and of our work with partners can be seen in the decisions of governing bodies.

Norway's priorities in the individual governing bodies vary somewhat from organisation to organisation. The aim of improving effectiveness and the individual organisation's ability to react flexibly to new situations and needs means that there are a number of recurring issues:

- The organisation concerned must have a well-defined strategic focus for its activities that concentrates on its individual strengths. It must adopt a human rights approach, and integrate gender equality considerations into every aspect of its work. According to the guidelines laid down in the white paper *Towards Greener Development* (Report No. 14 (2010–2011) to the Storting), the organisation's activities should include environmental initiatives in line with its mandate and tasks.
- The organisation must build on its normative mandates and support the implementation capacity of the country in question. Norway is working to shift the various organisations' focus away from project implementation and service delivery, except in the case of fragile states and humanitarian projects. This is particularly important in view of the increasing number of NGOs and private actors entering the picture that are better equipped to deliver services, and of the improved capacity of countries to assume primary responsibility for delivering such services.
- The organisation must deliver and document results. A sound results framework is essential for the latter, and Norway is working with other member states to strengthen such frameworks.

Box 5.1 Norway's support for UN development and humanitarian activities

In 2009, the overall budget of UN development and humanitarian organisations was approximately NOK 130 billion. This equals five times the total Norwegian aid budget for that year, which was NOK 25.6 billion. Out of the UN organisations' total budget, 65 % was spent on long-term development work and 35 % went to humanitarian efforts. Overall, Norway was the seventh largest donor to UN development and humanitarian activities.

The amount of official development assistance (ODA) that Norway has channelled through the UN increased from NOK 5.6 billion in 2005 to NOK 7 billion in 2011. However, the increase in contributions to the UN system has been smaller than the increase in Norway's overall aid budget, and the proportion of UN contributions relative to total contributions fell from 31.3 % in 2005 to 25.4 % in 2011. This drop

is primarily due to an increase in the support given to global funds, particularly the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) and the GAVI Alliance, which focuses on vaccination and immunisation. These funds are in turn important contributors to various UN organisations.

Norway concentrates its contributions on certain UN organisations. In 2011, almost NOK 5.2 billion, corresponding to 73.6 % of total UN support, went to just eight partners. This concentration of aid puts Norway among the largest donors to these organisations. For example, in 2011, Norway was the third largest donor to both UNDP and UNICEF, providing around 5 % of the total support they received. These large-scale contributions give us considerable influence.

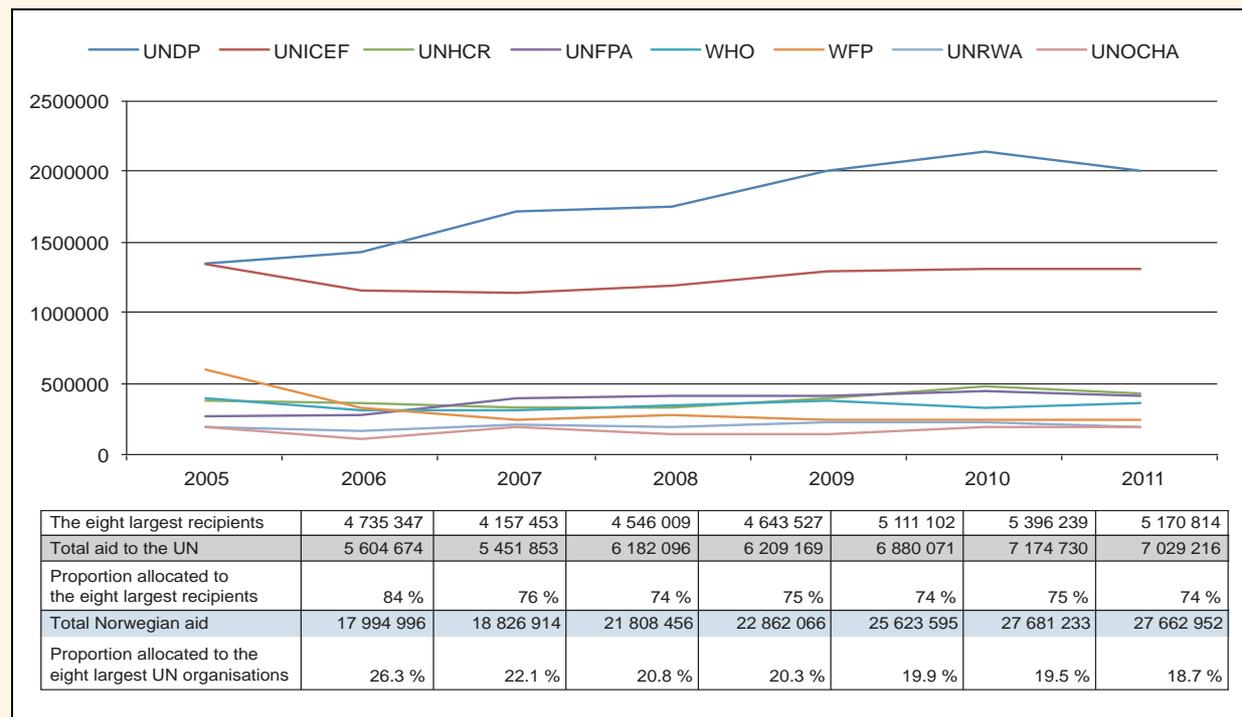


Figure 5.1 Development of contributions to the UN organisations that receive the greatest support from Norway. NOK thousand.

UN funds and programmes are financed solely through voluntary contributions. UN specialised agencies, on the other hand, are funded through a combination of voluntary contributions and

membership fees based on the gross national income of each member state. As a result, Norway generally ranks lower on the list of contributors to specialised agencies.

- The organisation must have a central evaluation function and an internal audit function, both of which must have sufficient capacity and be independent of management. It must also have procedures in place for preventing, detecting and following up on corruption.
- The organisation must have procedures in place to facilitate learning from experience, and make continuous improvements to its activities.
- Organisations must improve their ability to deliver collectively. Norway is giving priority to ensuring a constructive division of labour within the UN and between UN organisations and other actors, and to cooperating on achieving better results and preventing duplication and undesirable competition. Norway requires organisations to demonstrate a willingness to reform, both through the Delivering as One modality and through the cluster approach to coordinating humanitarian UN organisations.

5.2 Influence and control

Participation in governing bodies enables Norway to influence the plans, budgets and performance of individual organisations. It also provides an opportunity to ensure that organisations have adequate guidelines for their activities, as well as reliable control systems. Through its board memberships, Norway is able to follow whether organisations implement the priorities and guidelines adopted by their governing bodies.

In recent years the Government has devoted resources to professionalising Norway's work on the governing bodies of UN funds, programmes and specialised agencies. In line with the recommendations of the Auditor General for the work with UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF, we have made sure that the efforts to promote Norwegian priorities are verifiable. We are drawing up common guidelines for participation in governing bodies. Norad's capacity to provide expert assessments has been strengthened.

To gain acceptance for Norwegian positions on reform and cross-sectoral issues, it is important that Norway acts consistently in governing bodies within the UN system. Coordination of Norway's various memberships therefore has high priority. Applying decisions made by the governing body of one organisation to the work in that of other organisations enables Norway to contribute to improving several organisations at the same time.

Different types of organisations have different governance structures, and opportunities to exert influence and control vary. Whether or not Norway has a formal place on an organisation's board is not always decisive, since in most cases all member states have observer status and full rights to speak and make proposals. Norway makes active use of this opportunity.

UN funds and programmes, which operate under mandates issued by the UN General Assembly, have the simplest structures. They have their own executive boards and no sub-committees, and board decisions provide clear guidance to the organisation concerned. UN specialised agencies generally take their mandates from a special instrument of international law, and have a tiered governance structure. Each organisation has its own general assembly or general conference, such as the World Health Assembly of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Labour Conference of the International Labour Organization (ILO). The organisation's annual general meeting elects a board or council that prepares decisions for the annual general meeting and subsequently implements them. A third tier comprises formally appointed committees that assist the board in financial and administrative, and often also technical, issues.

Norway is also able to influence entities within the UN Secretariat, such as the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), through the subsidiary organs of the General Assembly and direct dialogue with the Secretariat, both bilaterally and as a member of a donor group.

Norway and other member states are placing increasing emphasis on transparency, and the governing bodies of some organisations have recently made decisions promoting transparency, primarily in connection with internal audit reports. Participation in these bodies allows Norway to assess the efforts to follow up the reports and to contribute to improvements. Moreover, in the context of development cooperation, transparency that allows the public to scrutinise all planned measures is one of the main prerequisites for greater local ownership and anti-corruption efforts. Norway will continue to promote transparency at country level and centrally within the UN.

The Government is giving high priority to efforts to improve UN leadership and results. Exerting influence effectively is very labour-intensive, and requires comprehensive technical

Box 5.2 Board participation – what Norway does and what it achieves

Examples of results achieved by Norway through its work on the boards of UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF

- A roadmap has been adopted for UNDP's and UNICEF's new long-term plans. It ensures dialogue between the executive boards and the organisations on sharpening their strategic focus and improving results frameworks.
- UNFPA has sharpened its strategic focus and improved its results framework, and is concentrating its efforts in individual programme countries.
- A joint, results-based budget reform has been launched by UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN Women.
- The organisations are reporting in greater detail on whistleblowing cases and how these are followed up.
- Capacity to investigate suspicions of financial and other irregularities has been increased.

- A decision has been made to publish internal UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF audit reports in full.

During its membership of the UNESCO executive board in the period 2005–09, Norway gave priority to:

- making the work of the secretariat, the board and the general conference more effective,
- working for stricter priorities and better focus in programme work,
- shifting the operational focus from projects to programmes,
- promoting a better balance between work at headquarters and work in the field,
- encouraging closer cooperation with the rest of the UN at country level,
- the conducting of an independent external evaluation.

assessments by Norad and Norwegian embassies. In the case of some organisations, exerting influence also requires close coordination, both between Norwegian ministries and with other actors. The bodies responsible for coordination include the national committees of UN organisations, such as the Norwegian FAO Committee, the Norwegian ILO Committee and the Norwegian UNESCO Committee. Coordination is also an important aspect of ILO's work due to the organisation's tripartite structure, which in addition to member states includes both employer and employee representatives. The Government considers that board meetings should be ranked in order of priority so that the extent of the work involved in the preparations reflects the importance of each particular organisation for Norway's priorities and the size of Norway's contribution.

We need knowledge of how the UN organisations work at country level if we are to do a good job in governing bodies. The embassies contribute to this mainly through their assessments of selected country programmes, while Norad conducts technical assessments of the results. The Government wishes to strengthen this aspect of our board participation by choosing a certain number of embassies to maintain regular contact with UN organisations over time, in consultation with the Ministry. As in other aspects of our work in the UN, alliance-building and dialogue with

other member states are an important part of our efforts to promote our priorities.

Norway will give priority to its work in the governing bodies of UN organisations. The importance of ensuring that the work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs vis-à-vis the organisations is documented and verifiable was emphasised by the Storting in its consideration of a report by the Office of the Auditor General on the focus on results in Norwegian development cooperation (recommendation of the Standing Committee on Scrutiny and Constitutional Affairs, Recommendation S No. 104 S (2011–2012)). The recommendations of the Auditor General's report have been implemented. In addition to ensuring documentation through comprehensive instructions for board meetings, a new format has been introduced for reports on UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF, which describe how Norway's views have been implemented and how far they have been incorporated into board decisions.

5.3 Results-based management and results reporting

The Government believes that results-based management is important for two reasons.

It improves the results of development aid. Systematic implementation and evaluation, knowl-

edge-based decision-making, continuous learning and organisational adaptation are essential to the effective achievement of results.

- i. Results-based management is a prerequisite for the reliability of reported results, and for holding organisations accountable to their governing bodies, donors and programme countries.
- ii. Norway works together with other member states to improve documentation of the results achieved by UN organisations. Organisations should have long-term plans accompanied by a results framework that specifies what they are expected to achieve and how to achieve it. It is also important that the results framework facilitates the monitoring of progress on adopted plans. One of Norway's priorities is to ensure that results frameworks provide for reporting on the results achieved by the organisation both as a whole and in individual countries. Accordingly, systems are required to link results with approved organisational priorities and enable information from the country level to be aggregated. Some organisations have introduced such systems, while others are slower to do so.

The Government also intends to strengthen the organisations' budgets with a view to achieving results. Norway plays a leading role in promoting the ongoing joint budget reform of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN Women, which will improve the insight of these organisations' boards into expenditure, and strengthen the use of budgets to achieve results. The reform has introduced regular consultations between management and boards, and thus improved the latter's ability to influence ongoing processes. WHO has launched a similar reform.

UN organisations face a number of challenges in relation to results-based management.

There is a risk that the strong emphasis on reporting and documentation will cause organisations to focus only on quantifiable results. It is therefore essential to develop methods for assessing results in every area where progress is expected. The social impacts of the normative and standard-setting work of UN organisations, such as policy development and institution-building, are more difficult to measure. Even if an organisation reports annually on, for example, how many countries it has assisted with drafting certain legislation or how many countries have adopted such legislation, it is difficult to document the effects on social development. Nor is a large proportion of normative work easy to quantify in a meaning-

ful way. It is also important to prevent organisations from satisfying the expectation of quick results by focusing their activities on areas where reporting results is easiest. Accordingly, organisations must develop other methods for assessing progress and showing evidence of results, such as formative research, case studies and surveys. After the project has been terminated, the evaluation is the most important source of data for assessing whether an organisation has achieved its goals. The Government will seek to ensure that evaluations of results take both short-term and long-term results into account.

It is important to be aware that the risk of UN organisations not achieving the desired results increases when member states expect them to operate in fragile states and regions. There is a greater risk of corruption and of funds not being used as intended. Member states and donors must accept that a far higher risk is attached to work in fragile states than to work in countries with more stable conditions and stronger institutions, but the risk level in such countries presents a dilemma. Risk assessments and plans for risk management are an important aspect of performance. Norway expects organisations to conduct risk assessments, introduce measures to reduce risk, and notify donors and member states of problems and actions. Several UN organisations plan to launch a joint initiative to establish a dialogue with large donors on these issues. The Government will participate actively in these discussions.

The Government takes the view that nothing less than the highest standards must apply to results-based management. Good plans, systems and tools are necessary, but insufficient. Norway expects the heads of organisations to make it clear that results are what counts, and that performance is one of the criteria for staff assessment, particularly for management at all levels.

5.4 Funding

5.4.1 Voluntary contributions – the consequences of different forms of funding

The way UN organisations' activities are funded directly influences their effectiveness. Both core contributions and earmarked contributions have advantages and disadvantages. As a large provider of core and earmarked contributions to UN organisations, it is important for Norway to be fully aware of the consequences of the different forms of funding.

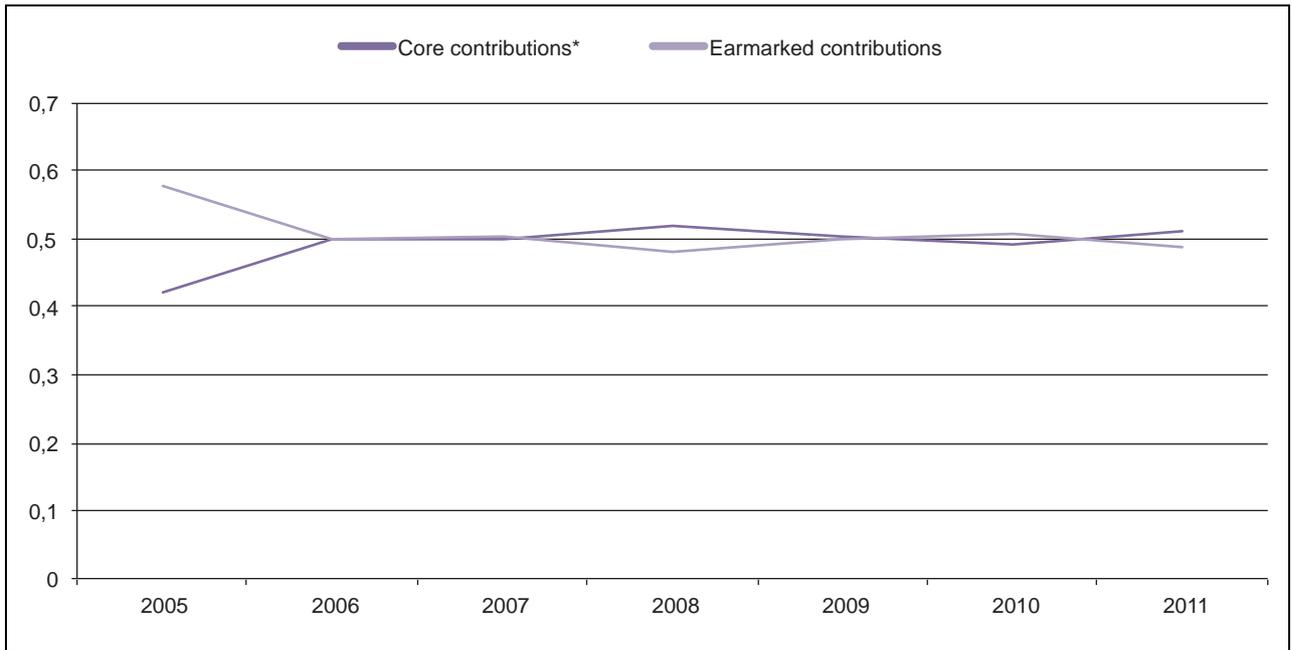


Figure 5.2 Percentage trends in Norway's core contributions and earmarked contributions to the UN.

* Core contributions also include assessed contributions to specialised agencies.

Source: Norad's statistics database

Core contributions are the cornerstone of every UN organisation. Large core contributions enable the organisation to allocate resources in accordance with adopted priorities, which makes it easier to comply with instructions from governing bodies, allows them to plan strategically, and gives them the flexibility they need to adapt to

changed conditions and new situations. A large proportion of core resources is a basic condition if the organisations are to contribute funds from their own budgets to finance UN reform at country level (Delivering as One).

The proportion of core contributions to the total income of the development organisations has

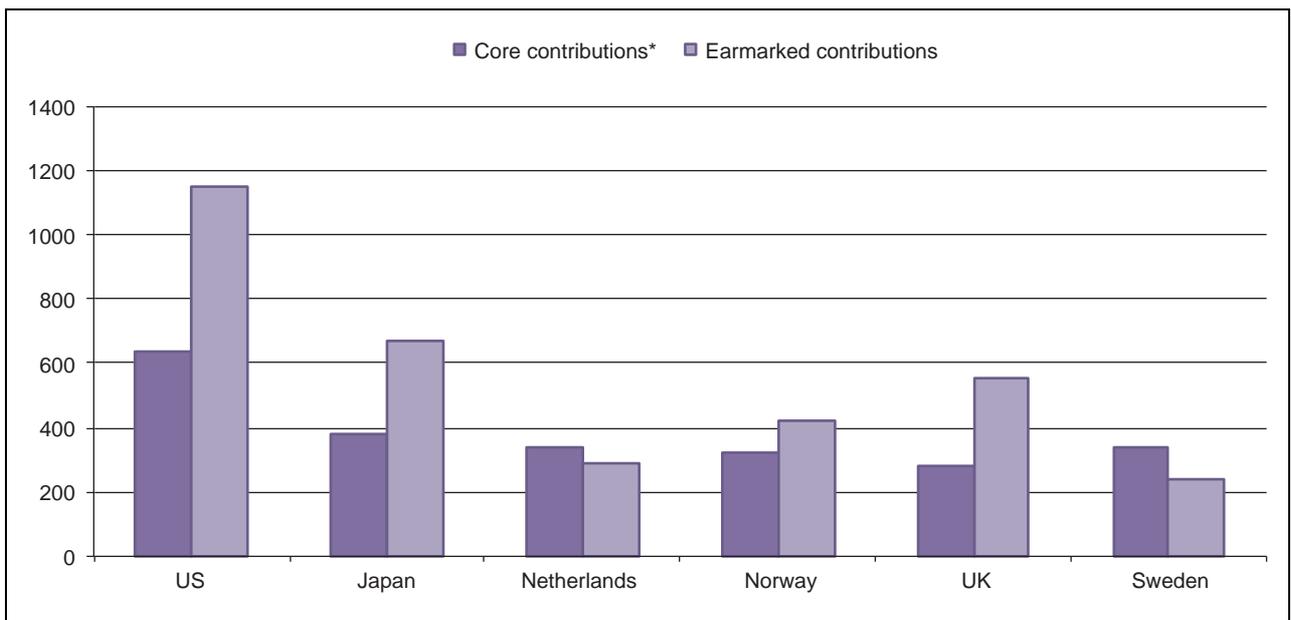


Figure 5.3 The largest contributors among OECD member states of core contributions and earmarked contributions to UN development activities and humanitarian assistance. 2010 figures. USD million.

Source: Norad's statistics database

Box 5.3 Trends in Norway's core contributions

Norway's core contributions have generally been maintained at the same nominal level since 2007 and 2008 respectively, following an increase in contributions to most organisations in the period 2005–07. One exception is UN Women. Norway increased its annual core contribution to this organisation from NOK 18 million in 2005 to NOK 82.5 million in 2011 in order to reflect our focus on women's rights and gender equality. Another important exception is UNICEF, where our core contribution was gradually increased from NOK 300 million in 2006 to NOK 450 million in 2009. However, this sum accounts for less than one-third of our total annual support for UNICEF. Our large earmarked contributions to UNICEF are primarily linked with our priority focus on education for girls. Thematic support for UNICEF's education efforts totalled NOK 500 million in 2011, and increased to NOK 550 million in 2012.

The proportion of non-earmarked contributions towards long-term UN development work and humanitarian assistance in the period 2005–11, including the assessed contributions to UN specialised agencies, came to around 50 % of Norway's total contributions to the UN. In 2005, the proportion was 58 %.

declined considerably in the last five years, from 68 % in 1994 to 30 % in 2010.

Norway believes that core contributions are an instrument for making organisations more effective. Large core contributions support our efforts in governing bodies and increase our influence.

A high proportion of earmarking has negative consequences for the effectiveness of UN organisations. The necessity for mobilising resources promotes competition rather than cooperation between organisations. Furthermore, organisations cannot undertake commitments until the pledged contributions have been paid out, and this limits their ability to plan for the long term. If for some reason an earmarked project cannot be carried out, the unused funds may remain in the account. Earmarking also involves more administration, for example because the donors require separate reports.

Norway has used earmarking to highlight its contributions to political priority areas. One weak-

ness of core contributions is that it is difficult to document the role they play in the achievement of particular political goals, even when these are based on the organisation's strategic priorities. For example, core contributions to UNICEF cannot be reported as support for education despite the fact that this is one of the organisation's primary tasks.

The disadvantages of earmarking for organisations depend to some extent on the degree of earmarking. There are fewer disadvantages to thematic contributions that support overall priorities in an organisation's long-term plan, since such funds are more flexible and do not impose separate reporting requirements. Project funding, on the other hand, clearly carries the most disadvantages. A stronger focus should therefore be directed at the degree and type of earmarking and at the various forms of pooled funding, including multi-donor funds. It is important for large donors like Norway that core resources are not used to subsidise activities supported by earmarked funds.

The predictability of funding influences the ability of UN organisations to plan programme activities and organisational changes. As pointed out by the Storting in a recommendation of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence (Recommendation S No. 84 (2010–2011)), predictability is a key condition for the effectiveness of development aid, and multi-year commitments are considered a step forward. The Government will continue to consider using multi-year indicative commitments to core contributions based on clear guidelines. However, we believe that multi-year indicative commitments must be based on long-term plans. Accordingly, no new commitments will be made until the organisations' long-term plans for the period 2014–17 are in place. The general criteria for contributions to organisations will be applied when considering a commitment to an individual organisation.

5.4.2 Funding of UN activities in middle-income countries

There is increasing tension between middle-income countries that are still interested in a UN presence and the services it provides, and the least developed and other low-income countries that would prefer the UN organisations' core resources to be used where the need is greatest, in other words in their countries. The problem is underlined by the fact that the number of middle-income countries has risen steeply while the pro-

portion of the UN organisations' core resources relative to their total resources has declined. The middle-income countries wish the UN organisations to make concrete contributions to alleviating their own major poverty problems. Some countries have cast UN organisations in the role of supplier of services in the social sector.

The Government believes that the UN's universal mandate means that all countries, regardless of their level of economic development, are entitled to assistance from UN organisations to implement international norms and standards. However, we also take the view that the scarce core resources of UN organisations should continue to be utilised primarily in low-income countries. Middle-income countries, and particularly those in the category "upper middle-income countries", must be expected to take responsibility for poverty reduction within their own borders by increasing tax revenues and implementing a social redistribution policy. It would therefore be logical for these countries to continue paying most of the costs of maintaining a local UN presence, and to continue funding cooperation programmes involving UN organisations. UN organisations should not necessarily continue maintaining country offices on the present scale. This should depend more on the level of activity. Developing more flexible systems for their presence in middle-income countries could make these organisations more effective.

The universal mandates and human rights-based approach of UN organisations mean that they also have a responsibility to promote the interests of vulnerable groups, including in countries in which this is not a political priority. Given the normative mandates of these organisations, and their role as an independent voice, it seems reasonable that their core resources should also cover the costs of deploying core personnel in middle-income countries.

5.5 Criteria for assessing UN organisations

In recommendations by the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence (Recommendation S No. 84 (2010–2011)) and the Standing Committee on Scrutiny and Constitutional Affairs (Recommendation S No. 104 (2011–2012)), the Storting requested the Government to describe Norway's assessment of the relevance and effectiveness of individual UN organisations, and to

ensure that these assessments have budgetary consequences for Norway's voluntary contributions. With this aim in mind, the Government is assessing the organisations based on the following criteria:

1. their results and ability to document them,
2. their relevance in view of Norway's political priorities,
3. their systems for planning, budgeting and results reporting,
4. their systems for conducting internal control and combating corruption,
5. their contributions to national capacity and institutional development and promotion of national ownership,
6. Norway's opportunities to influence the organisation as a whole,
7. their willingness to take concrete measures to implement reform.

The overall assessment should also include Norway's relative size as a donor and the effect of Norwegian contributions in mobilising support from other donors.

Some of the criteria have been used previously in published profiles describing Norway's support for multilateral organisations and global funds. So far these profiles have focused on qualitative assessment, and the organisations have not been ranked in any way. The organisational profiles are based on the extensive expert assessments conducted in preparation for board meetings, previous evaluations, and assessments undertaken jointly with other countries.

The joint assessments conducted by the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) are particularly important. MOPAN consists of Norway and 16 other countries, and assesses selected organisations every year. Norway also carries out assessments in cooperation with the other Nordic countries. One example is the joint Nordic study of the monitoring and control policies, structures and practices of UN organisations for preventing financial irregularities. The Government will continue the practice of assessing UN organisations according to the above seven criteria every two years. The assessments will be published.

If an organisation achieves poor results and fails to document its results satisfactorily over time, and also performs poorly in assessments based on other criteria, this will have consequences for Norwegian support.

The Government will:

- make systematic efforts to ensure that the UN has in place high-quality structures for results reporting and results-based management that are continuously improved,
- maintain core contributions at a high level, provided that the organisations perform satisfactorily in relation to certain assessment criteria,
- reduce support for organisations that fail to meet the assessment criteria over time,
- continue to consider making multi-year indicative commitments to support long-term planning and implementation by UN organisations,
- seek to ensure that more member states, including emerging economies, give priority to core contributions,
- as a rule provide additional contributions in the form of thematic support,
- seek to ensure that organisations' core resources are not used to subsidise activities that receive earmarked funds,
- seek to ensure that the core resources of development organisations continue to be used primarily in low-income countries,
- engage in dialogue with UN organisations and other member states on how best to approach risk in fragile states.

6 A coherent and predictable UN policy

Norway's active participation in the work of the UN has been a central element of its foreign and development policy for decades, regardless of the government in power. This engagement has enabled us to promote universal, and our own, values and interests. It is in our interest that international law is respected by all states and that the use of force is regulated. Thus our foreign and development policy is based on promoting international law, universal human rights and an international legal order. The UN Charter stands for universal values, while the international legal order helps to safeguard our economic and security policy interests.

6.1 Development trends and the consequences for Norway's UN policy

The UN and the international legal order administered by the UN system have a vital role to play in addressing global issues.

The UN's roles as norm-setter, political arena and operational actor are being influenced and challenged by developments in world affairs. At the political level, the UN system is being tested by the tension between legitimacy and effectiveness on the one hand, and the growing complexity of the agenda on the other. This presents a challenge not only to the UN system but also to the member states and other actors. Both the political agenda and the type and influence of the actors involved are unpredictable and constantly changing. The emerging powers are seeking greater influence, and wish to put their mark on agendas and structures.

There is also a growing trend towards the development of new regional and international power constellations. Individual countries and groups of countries have been forced, or have chosen, to seek solutions outside the formal collective organisations, and the number of regional and interest-based groups has grown substantially in the past few decades. This is nothing new, and is likely to continue, particularly in view of the fact

that regional organisations such as the AU are playing a more important role in addressing cross-border issues in their own regions. Regional cooperation and cooperation in various formal or informal groupings such as the G20 may help countries to find solutions to shared challenges, but it is in Norway's interest that the solutions continue to be legitimised by international organisations, thereby ensuring universal acceptance. In many areas, this means seeking agreement within a UN framework. Rather than being viewed as competitors to the UN, regional organisations and other groups should be regarded as complementary. The UN cannot and should not do everything.

In these circumstances, we are more dependent than ever on international cooperation and the maintenance of an international legal order. The network of institutions, standards and rules has a stabilising effect, but it cannot be taken for granted. A large part of the challenge inherent in creating the global order of the future lies in ensuring that countries of global importance perceive international organisations as relevant, and that the organisations reflect global power structures.

Norway and many other countries share the aim of protecting and further developing an international legal order and a UN-led global order. We intend to cooperate with like-minded countries across regional and political divides to protect and defend these interests. In this context, Norway will focus particularly on the following areas.

1. The normative function of the UN and the maintenance of an international legal order

The UN's normative function and its protection of an international legal order are key foreign policy priorities for Norway. However, these are being challenged by the increasing discrepancy between the development of norms and the capacity to implement them. Norway takes the view that more attention must be focused on implementing existing conventions, norms and stand-

ards. The work of UN organisations at country level is important, not only to help countries meet their international obligations, but also to build inclusive societies on the basis of a rights-based approach. It is also important to ensure that the results of the normative work are documented. The experience gained by UN assistance to governments to comply with international conventions, norms and standards at country level must be used to improve operational capacity at country level and to ensure agreement between norms and practices. Norway will initiate a study that examines compliance with the normative work of UN specialised agencies at country level.

2. The role of the UN as the only organisation that can legitimise the use of force

Although the composition of the UN Security Council is much debated, its legitimacy when sanctioning the use of force and other action is accepted. Global public opinion questions the UN's legitimacy when member states are unable to reach agreement. An example in this regard is the inability of the Security Council to agree on how to handle the situation in Syria. Norway will pursue a long-term strategy to secure a fundamental reform of the Security Council so that it reflects today's global geopolitical reality and not the world as it was in 1945.

Improving the UN's capacity to prevent conflicts through peacekeeping and conflict prevention activities is in Norway's interest. Norway will continue its efforts to strengthen the UN in this sector, both through political support for the development of guidelines and frameworks, and through concrete contributions to civilian and military operations.

3. The UN's promotion and protection of human rights

The promotion and protection of human rights is central to Norwegian foreign and development policy, and the UN is our most important platform for these efforts. The experience gained from the UN Human Rights Council thus far is positive. In particular, the Universal Periodic Reviews that all countries are obliged to conduct have proved effective. However, the member states will continue to discuss the interpretation of existing conventions and rights, and where to draw the line between non-intervention and respect for individual rights, including the right to be protected from abuse. The fact that countries that commit serious

human rights violations are elected to the Human Rights Council is a difficult issue. This makes it even more important to prevent erosion of existing human rights protection by building alliances with countries that promote human rights. Norway expects human rights to be mainstreamed into all UN activities, and will work for the adoption of a rights-based approach.

4. The UN's role in promoting development and global public goods

The work of the UN in the economic and social sectors is important not only for Norway's national policies in various key areas, but also for the implementation of Norway's development and humanitarian policies. The political debate is becoming more and more concerned with global public goods and the question of how sustainable development, climate and other such goods should be financed. Norway's view is that equitable distribution and independent national responsibility for income generation must be given greater political and operational prominence on the UN agenda. In the debate on the post-2015 UN development agenda, Norway will seek to ensure continued support for the efforts to achieve key health and educational development goals, and that the agenda includes the Sustainable Development Goals, which apply to all countries and take greater account of the structural causes of poverty, such as inequitable distribution and conflict.

UN activities in these sectors are also linked with the capacity of UN organisations to follow up member states' decisions at country level and to operate effectively. Norway will continue its efforts to increase the effectiveness of UN development and humanitarian organisations. As described in Chapter 5, we will work to ensure that these organisations document their results and have adequate control and management systems for the funds they receive. Norway will also seek to mobilise new donors to the UN, particularly for core contributions, to secure more sustainable funding and broader burden-sharing.

5. The need for UN reform

Because UN agendas are so complex and interconnected, they carry a risk of fragmentation and coordination at both operational and governance level. This means that member states and the UN system need the ability and will to view the different issues and thematic areas in relation to each other, and to ensure that procedures and follow-up

are consistent. Dealing with complex challenges effectively requires arenas in which such issues can be addressed as a whole.

Cooperation in the areas of health and energy, and support for the UN Secretary-General's Mediation Support Unit, are examples of Norwegian political initiatives that have been accompanied by financial support and have brought about substantial changes in the UN's working methods. Norway has taken the lead in emphasising the importance of these initiatives, thereby mobilising other donors and encouraging important reforms. Norway's broad engagement also helps us to identify and exploit opportunities to act when necessary. We will seek to improve the results reporting of UN organisations, use funding strategically to support our priorities, and promote initiatives that strengthen the UN and its work. We need to identify partners that share our priorities and build coalitions that will help achieve results and promote the reforms needed to strengthen the UN and make it more effective.

6.2 A coherent and predictable UN policy

The UN is not perfect, but for addressing many of the challenges facing Norway and the international community, it is the best alternative we have. Norway and other countries who would like to see a strong UN have a responsibility to help UN organisations and member states to deal with these challenges. The most effective way for Norway to do this is by projecting a coherent, predictable voice across all relevant forums, a voice that continues to stress our image as a critical friend of the UN and that focuses on improving results on the ground. Our actions will be clear, predictable and constructive.

Norway has considerable room for manoeuvre and influence within the UN. We have a history of success with reform initiatives, and of helping to develop and strengthen the Organisation. We are also known as a strong supporter of the UN with no hidden agendas. This is why we are listened to. We have the financial resources to back up our policy proposals in a credible way, and these also enable us to promote innovation and initiatives we consider important.

Our credibility and history allow us to build bridges between regional groups. Several of the countries that are becoming increasingly involved in the UN remain cautious about their own roles and agendas. Areas where interests overlap pro-

vide opportunities to form alliances, exercise influence and cooperate. Identifying common interests and priorities is thus an important part of our foreign and development work, not only in multilateral forums but also at country level. Multilateral issues, including those relating to reform, must be included in our permanent dialogues with governments, and integrated into our bilateral relations. Norway will give high priority to building and strengthening cross-regional alliances, since these are vital for promoting issues in the UN. This may reduce the current North–South polarisation that is obstructing progress in many fields. However, traditional partners, primarily the Nordic countries, will remain important to Norway.

We must invest our resources where they have the greatest effect, and channel our support to initiatives that are sustainable and organisations that deliver. Our starting point is that the UN is important for our interests, but we must continually review whether we are using the right channels and cooperating with the right actors, and also the best areas for our partnerships with the UN and other actors.

In addition to focusing on our thematic priority areas, such as health, education, decent work, and environment and sustainable development, we must also invest in and mobilise support for the institutions that are tasked with administering these efforts. We must do this in political dialogues, in governing bodies, and in our bilateral relations with member states and the UN at country level. Norway will pursue a coherent UN policy that is consistent across all forums. The policy will include the following elements.

Results and funding

Norway will work for a change of culture among member states and organisations in the UN system where the focus will be on results, willingness to reform and cooperation. Norway will seek to ensure that organisations have reliable control mechanisms and procedures in place to prevent irregularities and wasting of funds.

In Norway's view, mandates must be accompanied by adequate resources. This principle must be applied in practice across the various forums. With regard to assessed contributions, Norway will work for a revision of the assessment scale that takes account of burden-sharing and ensures that all member states take responsibility for UN funding.

As regards voluntary contributions, Norway's aim is to maintain a high level of core contributions to organisations whose performance satisfies the assessment criteria. Organisations that achieve good results and promote coordination should be rewarded. Norway will cooperate with other Nordic countries to mobilise greater support from emerging economies for the humanitarian and development activities of UN funds, programmes and specialised agencies.

Norway will support efforts to modernise the UN and make it more effective. The UN needs to improve its ability to put the right person in the right place at the right time at all levels of the organisation. It should also improve coordination and allocation of tasks between the central level, UN funds and programmes, and the specialised agencies. Norway will give weight to good leadership and partnership mechanisms. To increase our influence, we will also give priority to the work of the UN Budget Committee (the Fifth Committee), and continue to intensify our efforts in the governing bodies of UN organisations.

Leadership

Norway considers that leadership is a key factor in ensuring that the UN system is effective and relevant. In our efforts to support the UN's development activities at country level, we will give priority to strengthening the resident coordinators. We will also focus on improving leadership within the UN system as a whole.

Appointments to senior positions within the UN have often been guided by a tradition of selecting candidates from a particular group of countries and by fixed rotation, for example in the election of the Secretary-General. There are now five years until the next election, and during this period Norway will promote discussion about the continued relevance of the informal norms that govern the election of the Secretary-General and the leadership of organisations in the UN system. Norway will also strongly advocate transparency and accountability in all recruitment processes, particularly at leadership level, and seek to ensure that the final decision is based on the candidate's qualifications.

UN organisations do not bear complete responsibility for their effectiveness. Micromanagement by member states limits organisational flexibility and room for manoeuvre. Moreover, there is a lack of political agreement and willingness to implement the necessary reforms. North–South polarisation is a major obstacle to progress.

Norway will therefore initiate a discussion on the need for reform among interested member states across all regional groups.

Partnership

Norway takes the view that the UN cannot and should not perform all of its tasks alone. We will help to strengthen the UN's capacity for partnership with NGOs, international financial institutions, the private sector, other actors and groups such as the G20. Particular emphasis will be given to improving cooperation with the World Bank and the regional development banks, and with NGOs. Norway will emphasise the importance of enhancing the UN's cooperation with regional organisations, particularly in the context of peace operations. The UN also needs to identify better mechanisms for cooperation with the private sector, not least in fields such as global health, climate change and energy. While the UN system may initiate and lead such partnerships, in many areas it would be more logical for other actors to take leadership responsibility. The UN has a normative role, knowledge base, expert capacity and presence at country level. Norway will seek to ensure that at this level the UN focuses its efforts on its strengths rather than competing with other actors.

In the Government's view the UN system should further develop its institutional ability to draw on the necessary expertise from member states or relevant actors. Norway has worked together with a number of UN organisations and entities on developing systems for obtaining relevant expertise in the humanitarian field, in the context of democracy-building and human rights, and for peace operations. We will support the current reform process by improving the procedures for forming partnerships and recruiting external experts through for example standby rosters. We will work to ensure that the UN plays a more prominent role in facilitating partnerships between member states, for example South–South cooperation and triangular cooperation, and between UN organisations and other actors. Such partnerships must be based on equality and mutual recognition of advantages and benefits. Programmes at country level must take account of and build further on local structures and actors.

Norway attaches great importance to ensuring that civil society continues to have access to UN meetings and conferences where policy is developed, and will work for the continued participation of civil society in UN forums. We also consider

that other actors, such as philanthropists and the private sector, should have a voice in such forums, although not decision-making authority. Both member states and UN organisations need contact with academics and think tanks in order to become familiar with new ideas and ways of thinking. Norway will also make more systematic efforts to ensure that Norwegian NGOs and academics are consulted on issues within their areas of expertise, since this could be a source of mutual benefit for authorities and organisations. The national committees of UN organisations play an important part in presenting the work of the organisations to the general public, and Norway will continue to cooperate with these committees.

6.3 Financial and administrative consequences

Many policy areas relevant to the UN have also been described in other white papers. The present white paper is not intended to replace the white paper *Interests, Responsibilities and Opportunities* (Report No. 15 (2008–2009) to the Storting) or the recommendation of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence on interests, responsibilities and opportunities (Recommendation S No. 306 (2008–2009)), which set out Norway's current overall foreign policy. The same applies to the white paper *Climate, Conflict and Capital* (Report No. 13 (2008–2009) to the Storting) and the recommendation of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence on climate, conflict and capital (Recommendation S No. 269 (2008–2009)), which set out Norway's current overall development policy and the principles

of our development cooperation. Important aspects of Norway's UN policy are also discussed in the white papers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs *Towards Greener Development* (Meld. St. 14 (2010–2011), *Global Health in Foreign and Development Policy* (Report No. 11 (2011–2012) to the Storting, and *On Equal Terms* (Report No. 11 (2007–2008) to the Storting). The Government's UN policy is based on these white papers together with the Storting's deliberations. The Government's intention in the present white paper is to expand on its policy for Norway's relations and cooperation with the UN, and make it more specific.

No administrative changes are envisaged in the areas of responsibility of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or subordinate agencies as a result of this white paper. Norwegian development aid follows the OECD/DAC guidelines on criteria and performance. This white paper specifies certain areas where allocations could be increased, and supports the priorities presented in the recent budget proposals. Any increases in the allocations to specific areas will be effected by reallocating funds within the Ministry's existing budgetary framework.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

r e c o m m e n d s :

that the Recommendation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs concerning Norway and the UN: *Common Future, Common Solutions*, dated 21 September 2012, should be submitted to the Storting.

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